小玉ユキプロフィール

9月26日生まれのA型。長崎県出身。2000年「CUTiE comic」(宝島社)にてデビュー。2005年より数々の作品をflowersに発表。2006年「コダマユキ」から「小玉ユキ」に変え、2007年「光の海」(小学館)でコミックスデビュー。本作「羽衣ミシン」全5話は、初の連載作品。現在、flowersにて活躍中。

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flowersフラワーコミックス

羽衣ミシン

hagoromo 小玉ユキ mishin

羽衣ミシン 小玉ユキ

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●小玉ユキの単行本

光の海
羽衣ミシン

flowers フラワーコミックス

作品紹介

★さえない大学生・陽一は、ある日、橋に引っかかった白鳥を助ける。その夜、見知らぬ女の子が唐突に陽一の部屋を訪れ、女の子と縁のない陽一は仰天！彼女は、「自分は陽一に助けられた白鳥」などというのだが、そんなことって…!?透明感と潔さに、心ふるえる青春物語。かきおろし番外編「かえりみち」収録。

Cover design／名久井直子

フラワーコミックス 羽衣ミシン

Hagoromo Mishin

Kodama Yuki

＊flowersフラワーコミックス＊

Hagoromo Mishin

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flowersフラワーコミックス

Vol. 1 First Snow

Every winter, the swans migrate...

...from the northern mainland,
only stopping here for a short rest
before continuing south.

Soon enough, this town
will see its first snow.

I can't wait...

It won't be long until they remove the covers, either.

flap flap

flap

Once it starts to fall, this place will be completely white.

The Aoibashi will look totally awesome rising out of the snow.

*Note: Aoibashi is the name of the bridge.

Eeeeh—

S-she's loose.

Stay still, will you...

Please stop struggling so much.

flap

flap

Sorry, I'm just here to rescue you.

Ah.

sigh

float

float

That's the only one I have, too...

Ah, shit.

sloshh

Ah, sorry. My bad.

STAAARE

This sort of thing must happen a lot every now and then.

Right.

I guess the design of the bridge isn't the only thing complicated about it...

Youichi!

Hmmmm...

Youichi

ACHOO!

It's so cold.

Ah! You're right. Crap!

So you're here staring at it again, huh, you bridge freak!

If you don't hurry it up, you won't make it to class on time.

So his name is Youichi-san.

Awawa...

T-there's no way I'll make it in time...

There is simply no way I'll make it in time.

Oh, what ever will I do?

Ehh?

By that time, I will ask you to hold a short presentation.

Are you for real?

I never heard anything about a presentation.

!

Engineering
CAD-CAE

You have until next week to finish this task.

Hageromo Mishin

I wonder if we could borrow the key to this room.

Maybe I could pull through if I could work in the evenings as well...

Maybe...

...I should do that as well.

Me, too.

Me, too.

TAP TAP

TAP

So, like, in class today,

didn't you think Sodegawa-san was totally trying to sucker all the guys into helping her?

You think?

Well, duh.

I guess ...

So, you going?

Have you seen Kutsuzawa? I can't seem to catch him today.

Shiori-chan.

SLAM

CLOMP CLOMP CLOMP

Well...

I've got work today, actually...

What? You're saying I have to go all the way over to his place and kick him out of bed myself?!

I'm busy too, you know, with the thesis and all.

wriggle wriggle

You're sure he's not just sleeping at home?

Seems like he was up all night.

And I told him not to turn off his phone, too.

We got some additional orders for the net shop, so I really need to get a hold of him.

FLOP

Sure... Okay.

But, Shiori-chan . I don't really like garlic that much...

Hey, Youichi, lend me your bike. I'm going to his house.

It's not like I have a choice.

SQUISH

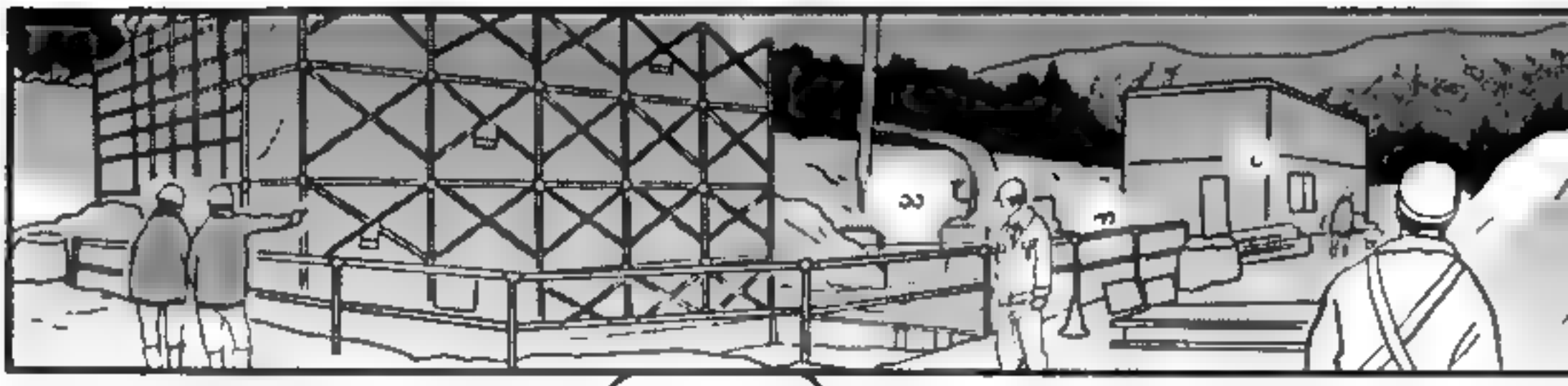
Two cloves so far

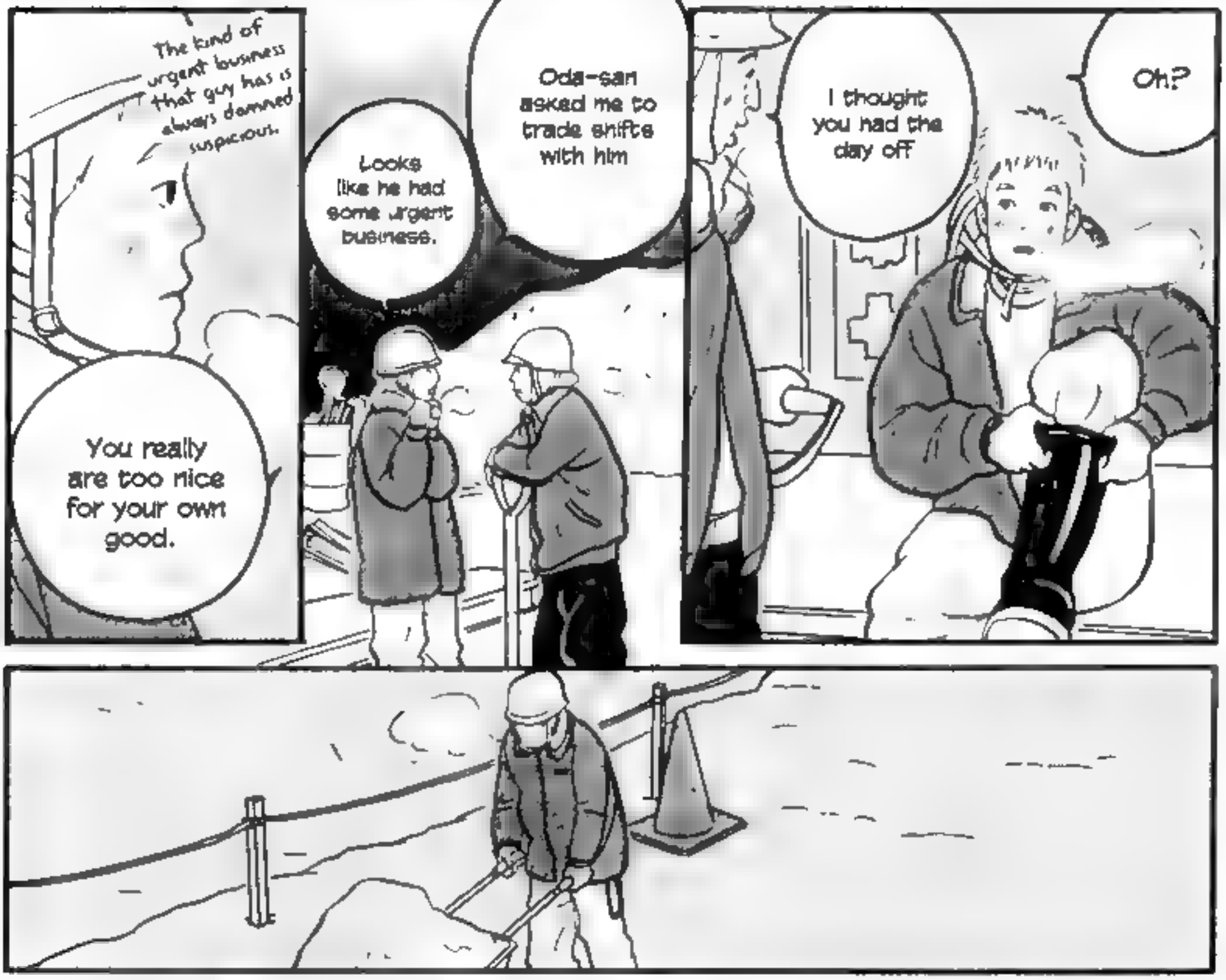
Um, yeah...

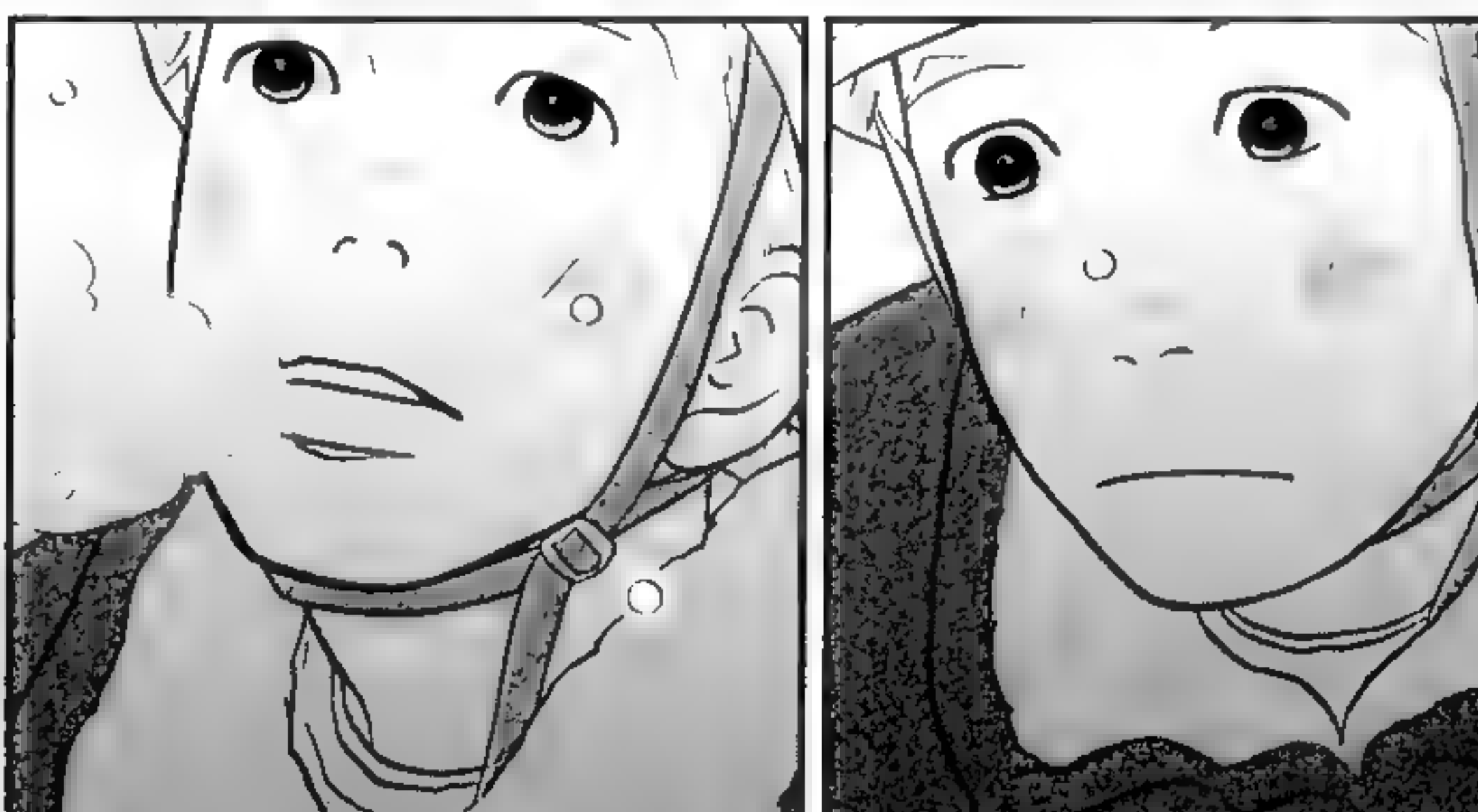
Seriously, third year students have it so damned easy. Oh, right, you're in your third year as well.

SQUISH

Eh?
Hand it over.
The key. For your bike.
Ah, okay.
BONK
GULP
SLURRRRP
Oh, come on. It builds stamina.
We'll be counting on you to help out with the packaging tomorrow.
Oh, that's right
Thanks.
CHING
CLOMP
CLOMP
CLOMP
Ah, sure.
Ehm.
She got you under her heel, man...
...that is just...
I've always wanted a female friend who was also a childhood friend, but
FFF
...
The garlic...
Ugh—




The kind of urgent business that guy has is always damned suspicious.
You really are too nice for your own good.
Looks like he had some urgent business.
Oda-san asked me to trade shifts with him
I thought you had the day off
Oh?



Ahh.

I figured it was gonna snow...

It'll never last, I tell you

The first snow huh?

THUD

I suppose I'll have to buy a new scarf

...

I wonder if she's safe...

She didn't hurt her leg or anything, did she?

Ah, right...

Snow is like...

That kind of feeling.

It's like youre thrust into a whole different world the moment it falls.

Well, having seen it all my life, it's something I'm completely used to by now.

But the very first snow fall always gives a special sort of feeling.

OPEN

KNOCK KNOCK

A newspaper blowing in the wind or something?

?

What's that sound?

FLAP FLAP FLAP

CLICK

OPEN

Who could be knocking on my door this late, anyway?

Who is it?

Yes,

SQUEEZE

Youichi-san.

HO

...What?

Who is she?

Wh—

creeeak...

Eh.
Hey, wait...
slide
slide
Ah.
It closed...
slide
CLOSE
Are you all right?
SLIIIIDE
Come on...
No way!
What?
Helloo...?
Um, okay, but...
Hello?
...
But I moved around a lot today.
I'm sorry.
I'm a little tired right now...

I really don't know her, do I...?

What's with her...?

...Nnnn

Whaaat?!

S-she fell asleep?!

Nnnn

Th-this is kinda scary.

STARE

...

THUMP
THUMP

Ah!

THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP

Uhm, excuse me, but,

If you sleep here, you'll catch a cold!

PULL

Maybe I'd better wake her up..

Well, anyway...

STAND

BLUUUSH

What the hell am I doing?!

Whoa!

drape

For now at least, I can get her a blanket...

A girl, in my home.

And she's totally cute, too.

W-what am I gonna do...?

There's a girl in my apartment.

Uhh...

Zzz

Zzz

She didn't even flinch...

GULP...

Sound asleep...

Kutsuzawa-kun still has his lights on..

(My house)

...

Ah!

Calm down! Must calm down!

Whoa! I just imagined something weird!

UWAAH

動転中

PIN PON

Hey, Youichi.

Kutsu-zawa-kun!!

What's up?

Help me out here.

It's an emergency.

Whirl

...?

So, what's the emergency?

I see it's snowing outside.

...Oh?

Uuuuuh

Kutsuzawa-kuuun.

Ku—

CHING

Here.

The key to your lake.

She said she left it in the stand out front.

Ah, right.

The Boss left this for you.

Hey...

If it were you...

...

...

...and some girl you didn't know showed up at your doorstep, and suddenly hugged you out of nowhere...

...what would you do?

I'd say it would have to be one of those.

Or "Strip 'em, sister."

Well, either, "Get the hell out."

Ehh...

You're sure there are no other options?

One neck warmer and one babushka.

If they're not done by tomorrow...

...the Boss will chew me out again.

What?

Did you have a weird dream or something? Sexual frustration getting to you?

I'm busy here.

...

She really did show up.

That girl.

You may not believe me, but...

...she's there right now.

She's sleeping by the front door right now.

Huh? By the door?!

For real?

...So, is she any cute?

Yean.

Yean.

...

'The hell are you on about?

There was this sound and when I opened the door "this" kind of thing happened and she said "those" kinds of things and then she was like sliding down and and...

Well...

Just have a look. I'm telling you, she's right there.

No, not a ghost.

Scary. Is this some kind of ghost we're talking about?

Yeah, got it.

Wait, but...

Youichi.

What are you trying to pull here?

Some kind of prank?

...

Do...

Do you see her?

There's no one there.
Flip
Well?
You sure you're not seeing things?

SLAM

Youichi?

Sorry to intrude.

I'm going home

whirl

.that might disappear at any moment

.. she really did seem like an illusion...

In some ways..

But, still,

what's with this feeling?

TWITCH

TAP TAP TAP

HISS

Ah.

Excuse me.

Erm...

I-is something the matter?

THUMP

TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP
TAP

The cat?

Hmm?

It's so frustrating...

Intimi-dation...?

I missed my timing in the intimidation phase.

I ... I lost.

Did something happen with that cat?

Did she actually have a fight with a cat...?

What is she talking about?

What...

I was afraid that you'd come to dislike me.

Youichi-san.

I couldn't find you anywhere.

But...

Ah, well...

I wouldn't say that, exactly.

I ... have no idea who you are.

...are... are you sure you're not mistaking me for someone else?

I'm... the swan whose life you saved this morning.

I was so happy.

And I wanted to pay you back, no matter what.

Youichi-san, I've been chasing after you the whole day long...

...and now I'm finally here.

There is simply no way I could be mistaken.

Right...

I see...

The snow...

...suddenly started coming down in earnest.

And everything in sight turned completely white.

...inside of my head.

As did the...

I can't really grasp what's going on here...

It's snowing like crazy out there. So I'm just letting her stay for tonight, okay.

Or at least that's what I told myself, any-way

spin

So...

What now?

Umm...

Ah.

Youichi-san, there's snow on your jacket

Pat

Right...

My mother gave me my name. It means something like beautiful wings*.

I would like to be of service to you somehow.

Please call me Miwa.

Oh, thanks.

I'll sleep over here, okay? So you take the futon.

I can't think straight

Or more like, I can't think at all.

The hell?

It was for real?

*Note: Her name consists of the kanji 美 = beauty or beautiful and 羽 = wing or feather

I'm sure I'll be able to think this over more calmly in the morning.

I wonder what it is. .

Miwa-san has been making something all morning, and she hasn't said a word...

Dead serious!

So, now it's morning, and I still have no idea what to do...

Uhmmm...

stitch stitch

I couldn't sleep...

BRUSH BRUSH

10

?

Eh?

Morning.

Yes?

PIN PON

Huh?!

So, is there something here?

What? What?

But I heard I'd get to see something interesting if I came over here.

Well, you were.

Wasn't I supposed to help you with the packaging later tonight?!

So we brought the goods over here instead.

Besides, why at my place?!

...Who's that?

...Eh?

Good morning. My name is Miwa.

As of today, I have become Youichi-san's wife.

swish

And so, on the morning of the first snow, when everything had turned white...

...not that I have any clue how, it came about that a swan girl introduced herself as my wife.

<Vol. 1 First Snow> The End

Vol. 2 Gift

What a shocker!

I hear she forced herself on him.

If you believed that, I have a bridge to sell you.

...

Ahaha

What?! You're kidding!

He's never even had a girlfriend before.

And she's pretty, too.

I wonder what the hell happened.

"As of today,
I have become
Youichi-sans wife."

When you saved me, you dropped yours in the river, right?

What is?

You're giving it to me?

So...

It's finished.

Y-yes!

Youichi-san.

TWITCH

Wife, huh...?

Is she talking about *that* scarf?

That's just impossible.

Nah

Maybe she really...

SHUSHU

DOKI-

Whoa!

She's so close!

Now you won't have to be cold anymore. ♡

You don't...

...actually intend to keep living here, do you?

Eh.

Hey... Wait a sec.

...Wait.

This is ... cloth!

All right then!

TUG

What should I do next?

"You should devote yourself fully to the one you fall in love with."

My mother often told me...

I can't?

...Oops.

Maybe I shouldn't have said that out loud.

Actually, that time when you saved me...

Youichi-san, I think it was love at first sight.

Oh no, I said it again! ♡

Love at first sight...?

OVERLOAD

Youichi-san.

Ah

Please show me how to use this.

Oh.

WOBBLE

Right.

...

Then put in some detergent...

You push this button, and then this one here...

Or swans, or whatever.

Excuse me...

Like, love at first sight...

...This is totally weird, right?

There's no way this should be happening.

Please watch the place while I'm gone!

DASH!

I need to cool off!

I have to go to the convenience store!

I... Just...

Yes!

Leave it to me!

Runaway...

A runaway girl...!

Now this I could believe.

Ah.

* The kanji highlighted below says "runaway."

独占！ ブレイク中 家出・放浪少

Yep.

And she's only doing this because she wants a place to stay.

Maybe she can't go home for some reason.

She...

...must be hungry, too...

If I think about it that way,

I can at least get my head around it.

You think he doesn't realize it's a woman's scarf?

Yeah, seriously. That is one totally cute scarf he's got.

GIGGLE GIGGLE

I really can't handle girls at all.

An!

Now he's trying to take it off! You think he heard us?

This is too much.

PFF

Oh.

They must be talking about this...

I totally forgot!

They're like creatures from a whole different world.

Come on, now you're overdoing it.

KYAHAHAHA

The washing machine.

Is it on spin cycle already?

I'm b—

Ah.

KA-CHAK

BWAOM

BWAOM

BWAOM

But Miwa-san...

She's very different from those girls.

BWAOM

BWAOM

BWAOM

blub

blub

blub

shtep

shtep

Pretty~

flomp

flomp

blubub

Look. It's like snow!

Youichi-san!

cough
cough
cough
What the heck happened here?!
ugh
BIP
Why...?
It ... It's empty...?
POP
POP
Maybe she's really the daughter of some super rich family
Laundry? That sort of thing is best left to the maids.
...
Well, she didn't mean anything bad by it, did she?
But, Miwa-san...
I'm sorry.
It's my first time doing laundry, so I didn't know how it works.

I couldn't be helpful to you.

I'm sorry.

If you make that kind of face...

Ugh...

Ah... It's fine.

Don't worry about it.

Is this really going to be okay...?

Ah, man..

This is my personal chef.

And what might that convenience store thing be?

I suppose she really *is* like that...

She's never had a lunch box from the store before either?

GULP

STAAARE

STAAARE

MUNCH
MUNCH

BITE

What?
Well...

It's just
karaage.
From chicken.

Aaah

This
is really
tasty!

What
is it?

Victory for
the taste of
the common
people?!

...Chicken...?

What's the matter...?

Miwa-san.

Eh?

Miwa san...

I forgot.

BLEH!!!

COUGH COUGH COUGH

Nah, can't be.

So maybe its..

She said she was a swan

There's no way it's true.

No frickin' way

Are you all right?

I'm sorry.

...all I do is cause trouble...

Even though I came here to try to be helpful to you...

If things continue like this, it'll be like I came here for nothing.

For some reason...

PIRIRIRI
PIRIRIRI

TWITCH

...

...when I see her crying,
I get a tight feeling
in my chest.

It's Shiori-chan....

o o

o o

Ack.

BIP

PIRIRIRI
PIRIRIRI

We might be at it until morning, actually.

Think you can make it?

Uhmm...

Anyway, we weren't...

M-make—

But there's a lot of work this time.

It's not like I consider pulling two newlyweds away from their newfound bliss a good thing.

It's about helping out with the packaging today.

Sorry to interrupt your make-out session.

Got it,
I'll be right
over.

But in that
case...

...you have to
let me bring
her along.

Right

RUB

...

.the atmosphere
will end up heavy enough
to suffocate us.

If we stay
here alone...

It's better
this way

It's a simple
enough job.

I'm sure
it'll change
the mood.

Don't worry about it.

I'm sorry, I messed up again.

S-sorry.

Miwa-san's never done this before...

an awfully avant-garde wrapping technique you have there...

That's...

?

example package →

And then you apply the tape there...

Yes, like that.

Yeah, sure.

I just have the address tags left to print.

Sorry, Kutsuzawa, but it might be best if you help out over there as well.

What's this supposed to be, anyway? Some kind of caterpillar?

Ah, man...

And it's my brand new scarf design and all, too...

She's a quirky one...

The type I find the most annoying.

Hmm...?

I wonder what brand this is?

A woman's scarf?

And with little solid appliqués from spare cloth...

Oh... This is cute. But more importantly, good work.

swish

This is a beautiful cloth...

...Hmm?

What's that?

Come on. What are you doing shirking your duties?

Where's the tag?

Youichi, where'd you get it?

Right?

What is this thing? It's totally cute.

Or more like, did you really buy this?

It was sticking out of Youichi's pocket.

Ah!

Youichi's?

Miwa-san made it for me...

Well, actually...

Eh?

Made it...?!

But... you both saw it this morning, didn't you?

The sewing she was doing.

Well, I glimpsed it, at least.

The creator of the caterpillar made that?!

Made it?! She did?!

For real?!

?

This is what she was making.

GAAH!

Hagoromo Mishin

Hey.

BANG BONK! RUMMAGE—

Shori-chan?

Excuse me for a sec here.

If it's okay with you, I'd just like to see what you can do.

...could you try making something simple?

Here and now...

THUMP

GULP...

And as much spare cloth as you like.

You can use this sewing machine.

It's so nice and cool...

THERE SHE GOES!

What the hell!

She's really something, isn't she?

SHIVER

Spacing out

So this... is a sewing machine...

I've heard about these, but never actually seen one before.

"ooh A pet

Who is that woman, anyway?

Hey.

Home what?

You didn't use one in home ec?

All right.

And then you put the thread through here.

Yes.

I'm thinking something might have made her run away from home.

whisper

Or that's what **she** said, anyway

Ah, well... "The personification of a swan"...

DEAD

Now we can start the actual sewing.

SNAP

...Huh?

You lift the foot like so...

TAC TAC TAC TAC

wheee

SNAP

TAC TAC TAC TAC

TAC TAC TAC TAC

SNAP

SNAP

turn

And when you want to change direction...

TAC TAC TAC TAC

What's she doing?

What?

SNAP

Ku-
Kutsu-
zawa!

Get
over
here!

All done.

With a sewing machine?

This?

You're joking, right?

She just made this, right in front of me.

Being able to make things really is amazing.

Amazing.

Boss... You really didn't have to put it that way...

Who knows, you might even pull in more than our current cash cow, the Knitting Prince.

TWITCH

Hey, wouldn't you like to try selling things you've made?

Through my net shop, I mean.

Right, Youichi?

If you pull in some extra dough, you could even save this guy from all that part-time work.

How about giving it a shot?

You can borrow this machine.

Does that mean...

I didn't even agree to living together yet

Well,

I suppose that's true, but...

Wait, I...

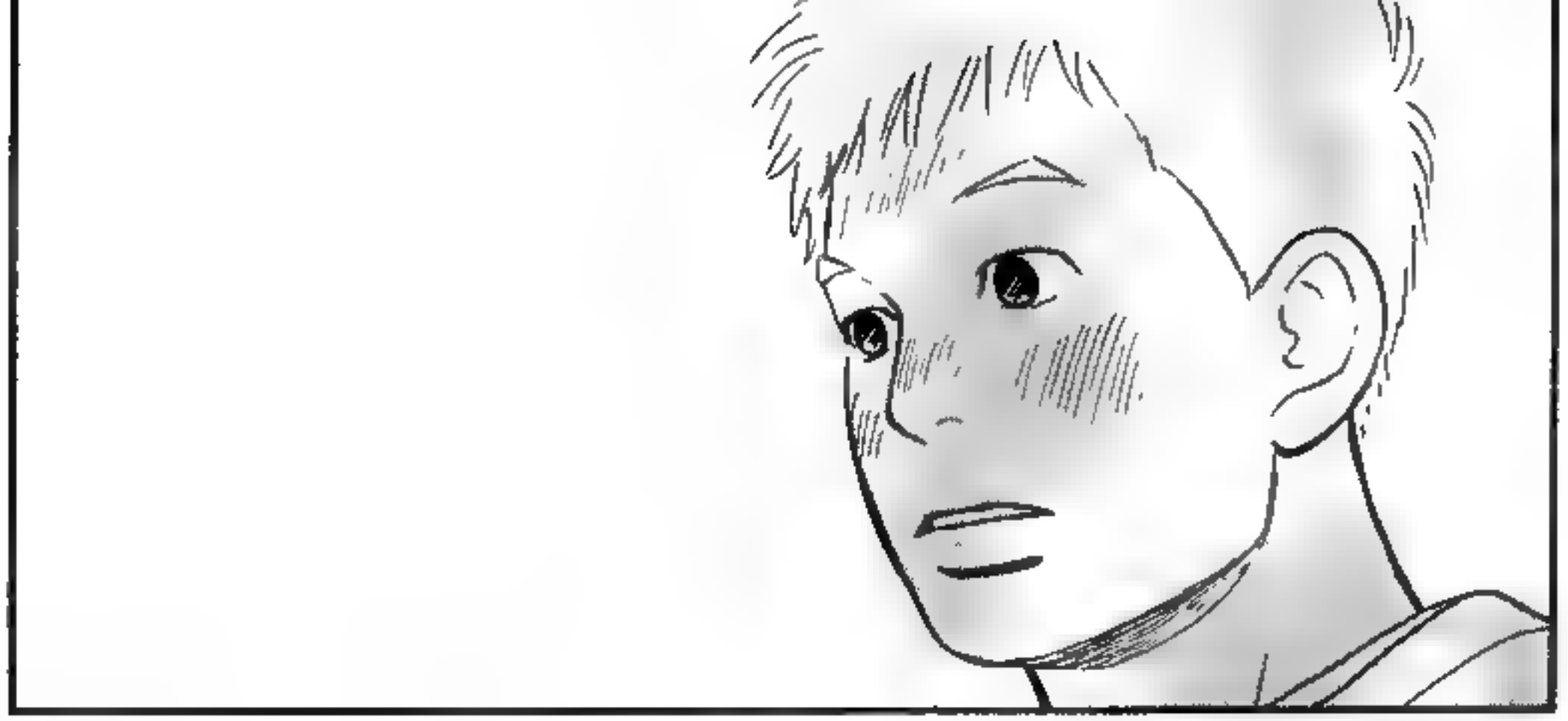
Eh?

What are you talking about?

Of course you would.

...even I...

could be useful to Youichi-san?



..show me such beautiful tears...

..what am I supposed to do?

But...

I'm fine!

It's fine.

I want to carry it.

I'll carry it for you.

Miwa san

To want so much to be useful to me

I'm

I'm not a person who deserves that kind of emotion

I'm just a poor student.

Ordinary.

Shy

Easily persuaded by others.

There's not a single thing that's special about me.

So bright...

Do you...

...like bridges?

Miwa-san!

I love briages.

To someday be able to build a bridge I've designed myself...

That is my dream.

All right.

In that case, my dream is to see that bridge some day.

W-well,

that's about all there is, though.

Ah, what am I doing talking about my dreams...?

And being loud about it, too...

BLUSH

Hagoromo Mishin

G—

GRAB

Give me that!

Ah!

Miwa-san,

it's the first time I've ever felt like this.

Youichi-san...

I'm telling you, it's fine.

I'll carry it the rest of the way home.

Between being happy and being touched, it feels like I could fly away at any moment.

The weight of one sewing machine is just what I need to keep myself on the ground.

<Vol. 2 Gift> The End

Vol. 3 Queen

THUMP

Ahh!

I'm letting go now.

That's right, that's the spirit.

Kissssss

Hagoromo Mishin

I'm fine, thanks.

I'm tired.

You'll warm up if you move around a bit.

It's cold just sitting there, right?

Kutsuzawa.

We finally got around to doing this, aren't you going to skate?

My thesis is in deep shit.

Well, I'm not exactly in a position to play around, myself.

Is that so?

Yeah, well...

It's their first month. It's supposed to be the happiest time.

As if my eyes weren't hurting enough from being up all night...!

Awfully...

...bright, aren't they?

By the way,

her stuff is getting really popular lately.

...she really is going to pass you.

If you don't watch out...

Both inquiries and actual orders are rising by the day.

FSHHHH

Ahh.

I'm so tired.

Youichi.

Yeah?

What do you guys want?

I'm gonna go get something to drink.

Could you look any less like you mean that?

Still yellow?

Behold the Sun. What color is it to you?

Doing it too much isn't good for your body.

Did you do it with her yet?

So, how about it, Youichi?

...

Not you too, Shiori-chan...

Like you haven't been dying to ask him that yourself.

Well, I suppose.

Don't mess with him. Youichi is a naïve young man.

Come on.

Quite unlike you, I might add.

It was really...

Actually...

Well...

!!

Hey!

Woah!

Ahh, taking a real bath really beats just a shower.

...Just after Miwa-san came to live at my place...

RATTLE

Youichi-san.

!?

FUGA.-

But,

perhaps...

Ho ho ho! It's still a bit early for you.

...Between spouses, but...

...There needed to be something known as "sexy"...

Sexy?

I still don't quite understand what she meant.

My mother told them ...

Or that's what I thought, anyway.

SNATCH

HAAAAAA!!

It's something like this?

I tried copying it.

THUMP THUMP THUMP THUMP

That was supposed to be hidden...

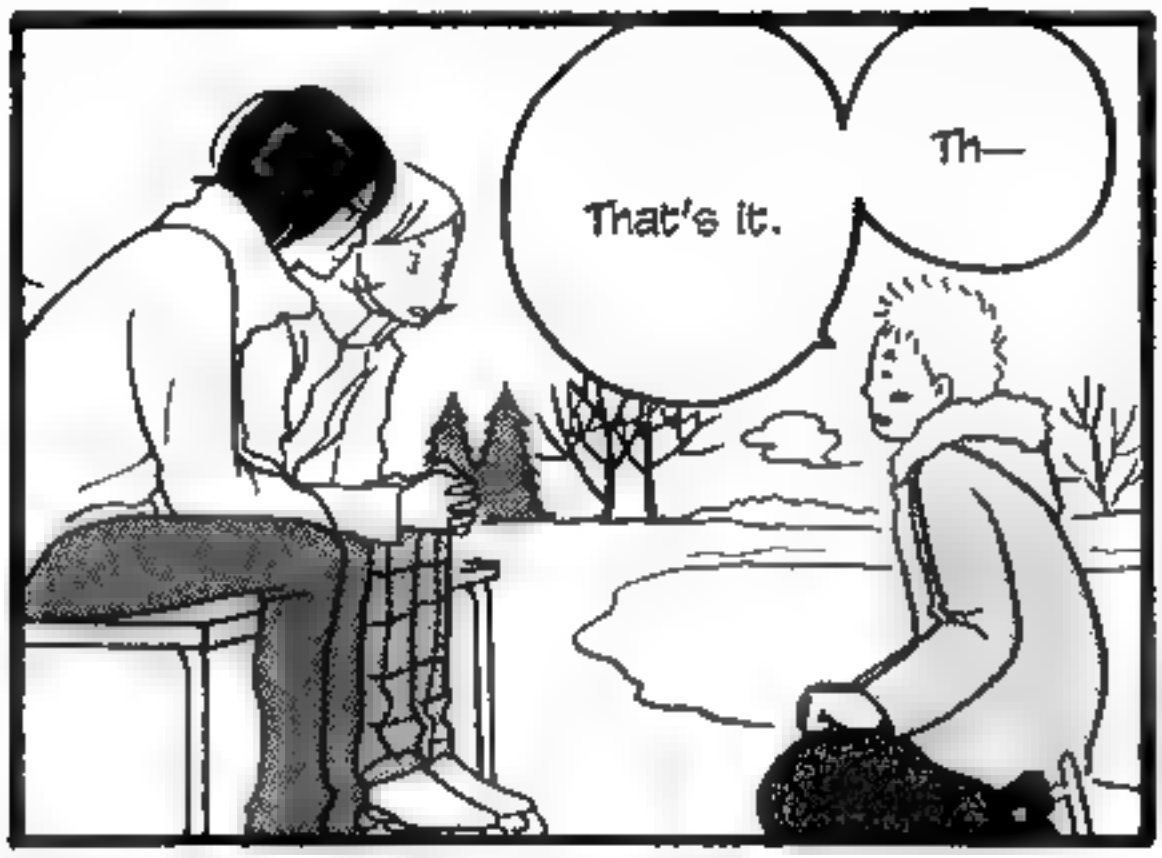
Reenacting the whole thing

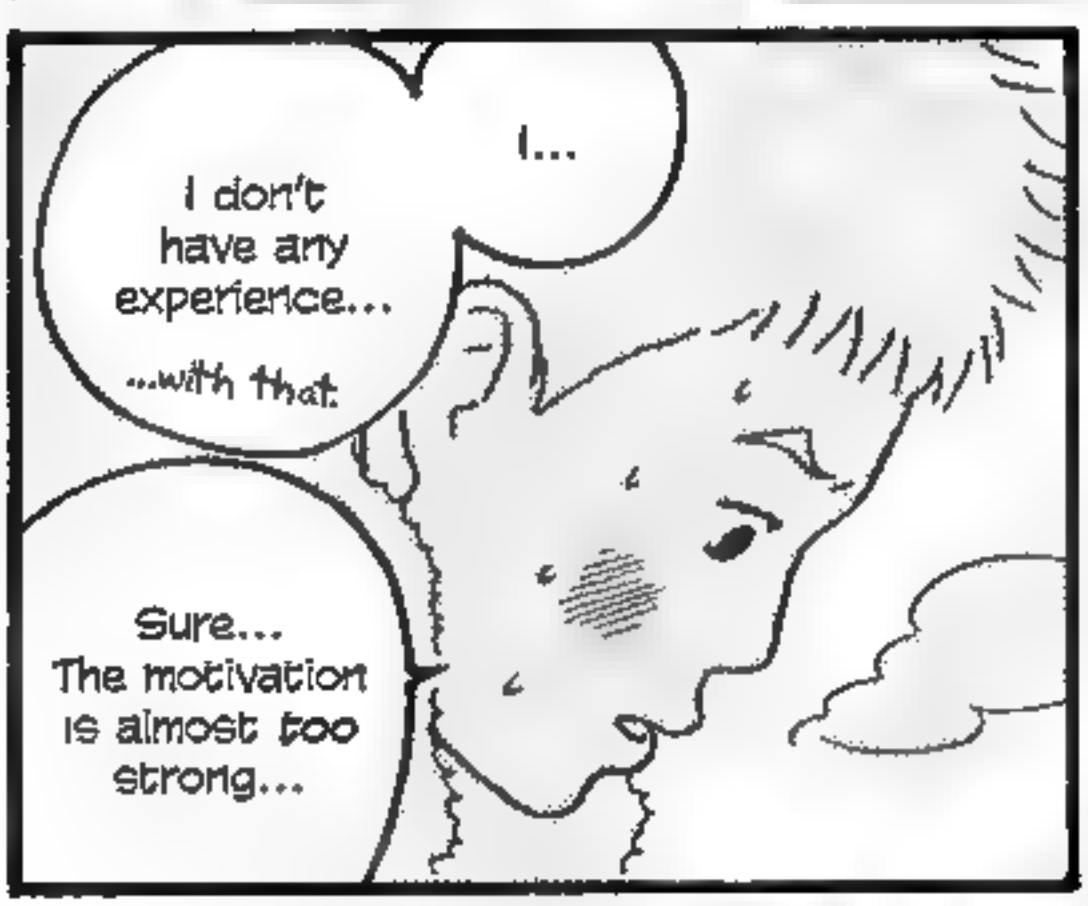
shake shake

And, that's what she said.

So, how about it?

No good?





We didn't do...
anything ...
That's it?!
I-I-I-

But, you know.

Just...

But...

Oh dear...

DEJECTED...

...On a day off...

TAC

TAC

TAC

TAC

TAC

TAC

TAC

TAC

...Or dozing off to the sound of her sewing

Plan taking a walk while holding hands...

Or greeting each other when coming home...

Hagoromo Mishin

Those things alone...

I can't stop!

What?!

FSHHHH

FSHHHH

Youichi-san!!

Are enough to—

KA!

So, you finally...

...return to me.

Eh...

Aaah...

FLINCH

...

He's looking over here.

No way!

Kyaa!

Isn't that Kutsuzawa-san?

Kyaa!

STAND

Ah.

I'll try waving...

Ugh.

What is it now? Are those freshmen from the handicrafts club?

Probably.

I'm outta here.

Kutsuzawa-saaan ♡

Kyaaa!!

Aaah!

SWOON

I've actually coordinated my outfit today,

with things you've knitted.

Oh,

indeed you have.

Kutsuzawa-san, please come visit our classroom once in a while.

Ahaha.

This scarf arrived in the mail yesterday!

Ah, I bought a hat!

Me too!

Touch me too

kya! kya!

Spaced out ...

And how well they suit you.

That purse .

I have this belly warmer that I always use!

Oh, that's not it.

Ah, I have this...

Hmm, I see.

I guess they do sell, after all.

...Was made by that woman, you little klutz!

Ahahaha. A belly warmer, is it?

PIRIRIRI PIRIRI

Not that it has anything to do with me.

Well...

Boss!

PIRIRIRI

'Scuse me for a sec.

I showed him my belly warmer.

He patted my head!

SNAP

Go ahead and take as many photos as you want for the net shop.

The new creations are already on the mannequins.

Seems like someone I know is coming here from Tokyo.

Some-thing?

Sorry, but can you go on ahead to my place?

Something came up.

I'll catch up on you, okay?

Here's the key.

Damn you, Kutsu-zawa.

Playing dumb like that...

Don't do things that'll just cause misunder-standings and then leave me hanging.

Fangirls are scary, you know.

FSHHH

Wait a second

Didn't he just give that woman a spare key?

Here.

Riiight...

TURN

Ehhh-

You have to go already?

See ya.

Be sure to buy my newest work.

Why...

Do I go running like an idiot?

To Yuuma

I'll be in town for a signing, so how about we meet up? I'm at the coffee shop on the street in front of the university

There she is.

Yuuma, over here.

My glasses are fogging up...

haa

haa

What's with the face?

My boss.

It's a long-awaited mother-son reunion, after all.

He's going to have a latte.

One latte, got it.

Two months is a long time,

for a parent and child

May I take your order?

Long-awaited, that's...

We saw each other two months ago when you had that lecture.

clack

But to meet you here instead is amazing!

I was so disappointed that I couldn't attend your signing today.

Oh my.

I watch Osare* Workshop every time. And I have your book.

Well, yes.

I'm a huge fan!

I went to your lecture, as well!

Excuse me...

You're the Kutsuzawa Ayako, aren't you?

*Note: "Osare" is a deliberately twisted variation on "oshare", i.e. stylish or fashionable, usually taken to describe, for instance, a person who thinks himself fashionable, while everyone else does not. Now, if it's supposed to be that show's producers being ironic, or just the mangaka, I will let you decide for yourself.

And... Would this be...

Your manager, by any chance...?

He's my son.

You're so much more beautiful in real life than on TV!

Oh, stop it, you.

Why, thank you.

He attends the university here,

so I don't see him very often.

Your son?!

But he's so grown up!

Ehhh!

To follow in your mother's footsteps like that!

That's [illegible] derful!

I'd love to see it! Would you mind telling me the address?

Please, stop it.

He makes some *adorable* little things too, you know.

My son [illegible] knitted goods, you know.

They just sell it through this *tiny* net shop thing for now, though.

Stop it.

Y-yes!

I-I'll go fetch it right away!

Do you have

something to write with?

Smile

This sucks.

...is coming along splendidly.

What should I do?

Kyaa~

My my. I see your business smile...

It's certainly not an issue of the workmanship or the tastefulness. But it would be nice if they drew people in more.

Or something like that.

There's something missing, something else they need.

They're certainly cute enough, and it looks like they'll sell, but...

By the way...

It's because I have a good example right in front of me.

I had a look at your recent creations.

On the net

Where you were going with that.

Some kind of psychobabble, huh?

I was wondering...

I'd say there's too little...

...affection directed towards any person in particular.

Oh, right.

There was someone else who was starting to sell things made from cloth there, right?

"Miwa"-san, was it?

There's little variation.

And they're not exactly fashionable.

But it's like just looking at her work warms your heart.

Don't you get that kind of feeling, too?

Every time I meet this woman. .

. she destroys any sort of pride in myself I might have accumulated, in an instant

If you get the chance to meet, why don't you try talking to her?

You might pick something up.

This is why I don't want this.

My head is filled...

With her words.

And there is more and more of it.

Ah...

I see.

Oh... Youichi-san isn't home.

He's off to work.

It seems I forgot something here the other day.

Would you mind if I come inside?

To even tell this kind of half-assed lie ..

...Must mean my depression, at least, is impressive

Be my guest.

"But it s like just looking at her work warms your heart."

Look...

.. that might have been..

. what I felt too

But, the first time I saw it...

I rather not admit it.

MUNCH

MUNCH

But anyway...

I'm fine, really.

Oh... Would you like some too?

If you're hungry...

No thanks.

...

From someone who suddenly starts eating just bread with nothing on it...?

What the hell am I supposed to pick up from *her*...?

No, nothing much.

I should have seen that coming.

...

So...

When you make these things, is there something in particular you think about?

Ah!

I'm always thinking about Youichi-san, though...

...When I'm making things, and even when I'm not making things.

But, you know...

Don't you imagine the people you want to buy your stuff, or something?

Love, huh?

...Is this what I'm supposed to be looking for?

As long as it makes Youichi-san happy, that's...

In the end...

Bullshit...

FSSHttt

...!

FSSHttt

BO

NK!

You mustn't do this sort of thing with anyone but the one you're mated with!!

Didn't your mother teach you this?!

Anyone who tries to get inbetween a couple is a horrible person!

RAWR! Don't you dare get in our way!!

LowlFe!!

Eeek!

Hey, let me in on that!

POKE POKE

Lovey dovey

UFUFU

She has a point there.

WHEEW

But, "mated"...?

A horrible person, huh?

Boss, sorry to keep you...

Waiting...

I'm done taking pictures.

So I'm going home.

KA CHING

WHEEW

Ah.

CLOMP

CLOMP

What the hell...

Ignore me, why don't you...?

...Is with everyone?

POF

"Anyone who tries to get inbetween a couple is a horrible person!"

"You mustn't call that man papa anymore."

Snit! She even made me remember something I *really* didn't need.

"Dont look at anyone but your mother."

"Yuuma...

...never leave your mother, all right?"

Even though it feels like ..

. I'm going to get crushed by something huge

...I'm trying so desperately...

Even though...

Miwa-san was it?

No, nothing much.

Don't fuck with me!

You have no idea

...how hard I struggle...

...add to my confusion!

...to find the exit!

So stop trying to...

Eh?!

Sit

Ah!

Shit.

Oh.

I unraveled the new stuff...

Man...

What the hell am I doing?

Sorry.

I was kinda late in coming home yesterday.

Spare glasses, with all sorts of issues.

Boss.

Did you already upload the pictures you took yesterday?

Look...

...Not like I care.

...

S-seriously?!

You saved my butt.

No, I didn't...

Well, you see, actually I...

...for always looking so grim.

Excuse *me*...

RATTLE

I'm not angry.

clack

Are you... Angry about something?

Boss.

Cause I haven't had enough new ideas lately?

TWITCH

If you're angry about something, just tell me, okay?

Hey, wait up.

CLOMP

CLOMP

Eh...

Why do I have to be angry, anyway?

I'm telling you I'm not.

Hey...

That's a pillar...!

Boss...

DASH

CLOMP

CLOMP

Boss...?

GRAB

Hey!!

SHK

LAT

...Boss?

Vol. 4 Thaw

Hagoromo Mishin

I want to erase it all.

Today's embarrassment ..

Dont think too much about it

I have to regain my calm and collected self

If I just move my hands, maybe I'll be able to forget.

...As well as everything that happened yesterday.

BONK

LONELY

Sorry, but I'll be...

I have to get to work.

Ah, crap. It's already 4?

I had it figured for around 3

Make sure to come home as soon as you can, all right?

Please...

KYUN

Haven't you been a couple for a long time now?

You and Kutsuzawa-san... aren't mated?

Wow.

By the way... Shiori-san?

Mmm, yeah?

Youichi is totally head over heels too.

Coup-

Is that so?

I've always thought you were a couple.

But you're always with him, and you look good together.

Kutsuzawa and I are just business partners, nothing more.

No way. Absolutely not.

N-

We're totally not going out or anything.

Please stop that, it's creeping me out.

Good together?

Because...

Kutsuzawa and I are...

Eh?

Why not?

Nah, that's not what I meant.

I just don't want to even imagine something like that.

You think Kutsuzawa-san is creepy?

What part exactly...?

That's all there is.

Hup

He really did his best on the new stuff.

Ah.

We just collaborate because our interests happen to coincide

A person who makes things,

and a person who sells them

What am I thinking about now...?

Unbelievable.

Ugh

R-ridiculous.

TRIP

Ah!

This is almost like-

WOBBLE

"I've always thought you were a couple"

"...and you look good together"

THUMP

CRACK

I honestly don't want to even imagine that.

Now I'm creeping *myself* out!

What the hell was that?!

Was that just...

...

silence

I wonder if I have a fever or something...

Huh? Is that...

Kutsuzawa...?

I'll just take these pictures and then head straight home.

I'm even getting the shivers here...

What's he doin...

PULL

I hate myself when I'm being all flustered.

THUMP

THUMP

THUMP

It was around then that I started feeling strange

Right.

Don't come near me

Boss?

No.

Do not come near me!

Boss!

Hey.

Heeey.

Pretty careless, there.

And you forgot to lock your door.

Boss.

what's with the pale face?

You look like a corpse.

Got his glasses fixed

RRRRRP

Huh?

Why?

What happened here?

Are... you... here?

Why...

RIP

...

Don't even think about flying out of bed.

I was worried, so I came to check up on you, obviously.

=SLAP

Cold!!

Is that any way to greet a person?

...

I tried asking Youichi, but he didn't know either.

And you still haven't told me the reason you're angry.

You've got some nerve... Asking Youichi like that...

You don't... see anything wrong with that?

LOUGH

You...

Towards Youichi?

Wrong?

...?

Last night... From your room...

Through the window...

I...

I saw it, you know...

You're saying I did something to him?

Don't play... dumb with me...

No way.

That was so lame.

So, the curtains were open...

PAIN

Is it about *that*...?!

Ah

BONK

Last night..?

Oh shi—

So... that was... just a lie, then...

You couldn't stand... that type...

I thought you said...

Duhh!

How the hell do I explain this?

All sorts of things kept piling up, and I was getting really pissed, and...

That... That was just...

There's not enough love.

No!!

You actually... liked her quite a bit...

No, ah...

...wait a sec here...

There's no way I'd be in love with someone like her...

...I didn't mean to do that, yesterday.

COUGH

Anyway...

Just... pisses me off.

I don't... want to hear it...

Enough... already...

Huh?

Hmm...

Ooo

Was probably.

The reason the Boss got angry...

So, wait...

...That?

Come on...

It's all because of the fever!

Forget about what happened in the cafeteria and everything after that!

COUGH HACK COUGH

I'm really the one who didn't mean to...

This... doesn't count.

Forget I said anything.

HAAH

When I invited you...

Two years ago...

COUGH

HAAH

...To start the net shop together...

Forget it, huh...?

Don't ask the impossible.

I decided...

That I'd never let love or anything...

...get in the way of the relationship we have.

That a lame thing like that would never...

...ruin what we've put together here.

I really love

the things you make.

...

So... forget about this, okay?

I'm going to...

...forget all about it too.

...Boss.

This moment...

...Might be the first time in my life ..

...that I've honestly thought a girl was cute

All right.

I'll finish this and go home.

Seems the fever's gone down.

Oh.

I guess even my heart. .

...may be slowly warming up

"I'll knit you a scarf."

"Mom, are you tired? Cheer up, okay?"

Happiness is when
the person you
love is happy.

"Thank you,
Yuuma."

"That makes me
really happy."

LOVE!!

"I want to see
[illegible]pleased."

"I want to be
helpful to the
one I love."

from the bottom
of your heart,

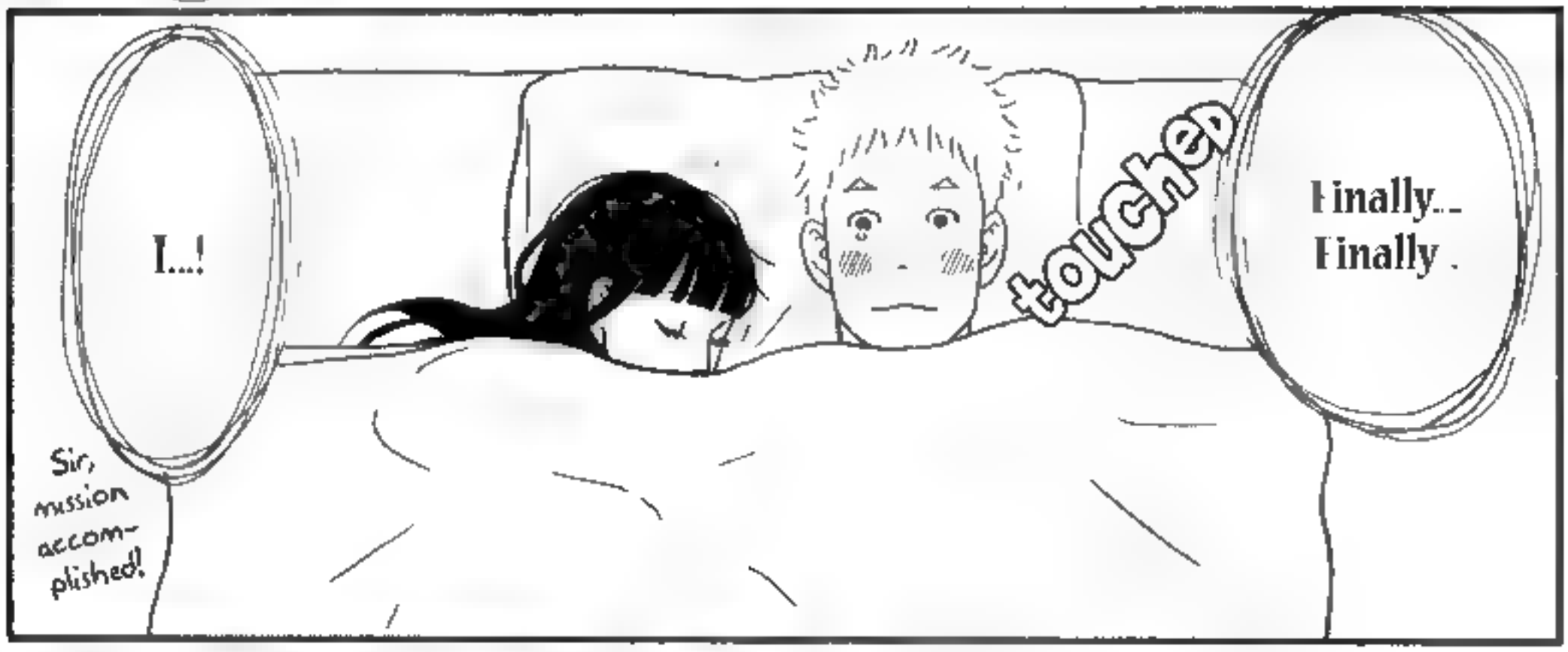
I'm glad that
you're here with me

PAT

To want to convey.

Hagoromo Mishin

Kutsuzawa-kun



Without a doubt,

Miwa-san is here beside me.

Oh, Shiori-chan, you caught a cold?

Ah...

...yeah.

I see...

...

But I've slept for three days straight, so it's mostly fine now.

Yoichi's sparkle is even greater than usual...

Eh?

Ser-ious-ly?!

It's written all over your face.

So you finally did it, huh?

Con-gratu-lations.

FLINCH

...

Yo...

Oh, Kutsuzawa-kun is here too?

I was wondering where you went...

Youichi-san!

Hmm?

Huh? She's not here.

Did you go telepathic on me?

S-stop it... Not in front of Miwa-san...

GRRR

Miwa-san?

...

I know we're always together...

Sorry.

Ah,

Sensei.

Fuse-kun.

OUCH

come here

Do you have a minute?

Sorry to interrupt while you were talking with your friends.

But this is a matter of some urgency.

I see.

Sorry.

Miwa-san, wait here for me.

What? No, don't...

DOOM

Your presentation the other day was very well done.

You can obviously do it if you try. I've had to revise my opinion of you.

Look, I'm sorry. My bad. Totally.

I swear I'll never do that sort of thing again.

Actually, I... I think I've found her.

My... "mated one".

And on account of that new-found drive of yours,

there's something I'd like to ask of you...

All thanks to you, I'm sure...

Good for you. That you finally found her, I mean.

Well, in that case... I apologise for trying to intimidate you.

What?

Switch

She's scary.

What?

...

What?

Eh?

What are you guys doing?

I'm back.

Cotton!

No idea, huh?

Whip

...

Material...?

Ehmm...

So, what material do you think this is made of?

We're checking out Miwa-san's stole.

There's a strange sheen to it... And it feels warm to the touch.

So where'd you buy this, anyway?

No...

I thought it was cashmere, but looking at it up close, it's completely different.

Well, no...

If it's not steel or concrete, you really haven't got a clue, do you?

It's more like, I inherited it.

I didn't purchase this.

You could say it's as important as a part of my own body.

It was something that valuable...?

Like, a memento of someone?

I've even stepped on it a couple of times.

Huh?

Closed his mind already.

Hmmm?

This stole?

It looks like his research team is going to participate in an international bridge design contest.

So he sort of asked me to...

Ah, well...

So anyway, Youichi.

What did the teacher call you over for?

Eh?

An international contest...?

...

...Help out with that.

Seemed like, anyway...

You should be proud of yourself.

Damn straight. This means he acknowledges your talent.

Not that I really know what it's about.

What? But, that's awesome, isn't it?!

And you're telling us this scrunched up like a little ball?

CRAB

Miwa san

Yeah.

B

Those words and Miwa sans creations are what inspired me to get serious about wanting to actually build a bridge

"My dream is to see that bridge someday"

I did my best.

It's all thanks to you, Miwa-san.

I've changed .

...From the timid person who simply liked bridges .

. .And who couldn't do anything

I'm going to work even harder from now on.

...For your sake.

I've

. only just begun

Theres no room for slacking off

The real fight starts here

Im going to work until I can work no more.

is no longer just mine, any more

Sorry, but the teacher's waiting for me.

My dream

Lucky bastard

Fuse-kun, let's do that assignment together.

Youichi-san, please don't overwork yourself.

Sorry I couldn't come home yesterday.

I'm so tired.

SQUEEZE

Welcome home.

It's just as much Miwa sans

I'm just a bit sleepy.

smooch

Nah, it's fine.

Youichi-san...

There's something I need to talk to you about...

Sure...

Can it wait until tomorrow?

...

Does it have to be now?

But I'm so sleepy, my head won't work right.

ROLL OVER

flap flap

TWITCH

I guess so...

Well, so it tomorrow...

KNOCK

KNOCK

KNOCK

KNOCK

OPEN

You've lost weight, Miwa...

Are you eating all right?

This isn't a good place to talk.

Let's go for a walk.

Nee-san.

...Yes.

on the day of departure.

Be sure not to forget this

PULL

You understand, don't you?

weft

Miwa-saaan!

We've basically finished the preparations for the competition as well, so I got to go home early.

This is so sweet.

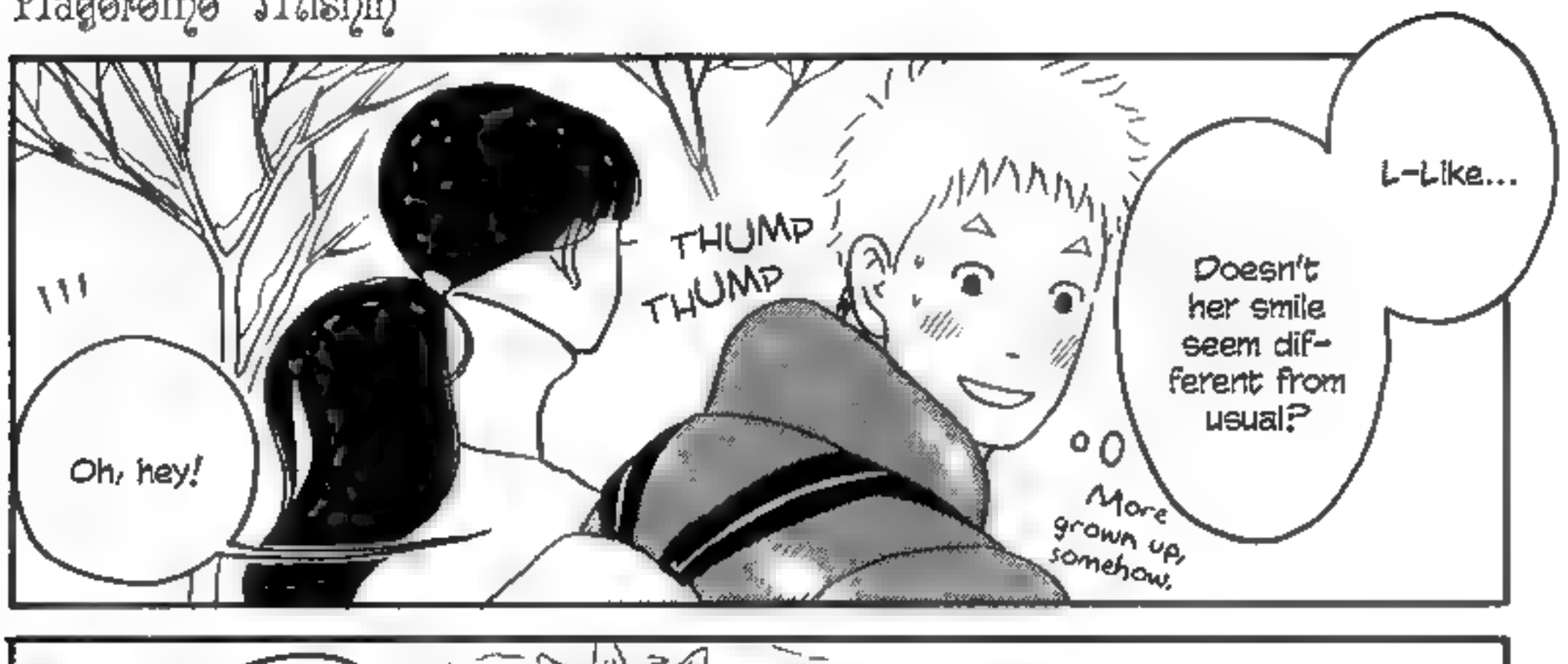
You know, we got the afternoon off today.

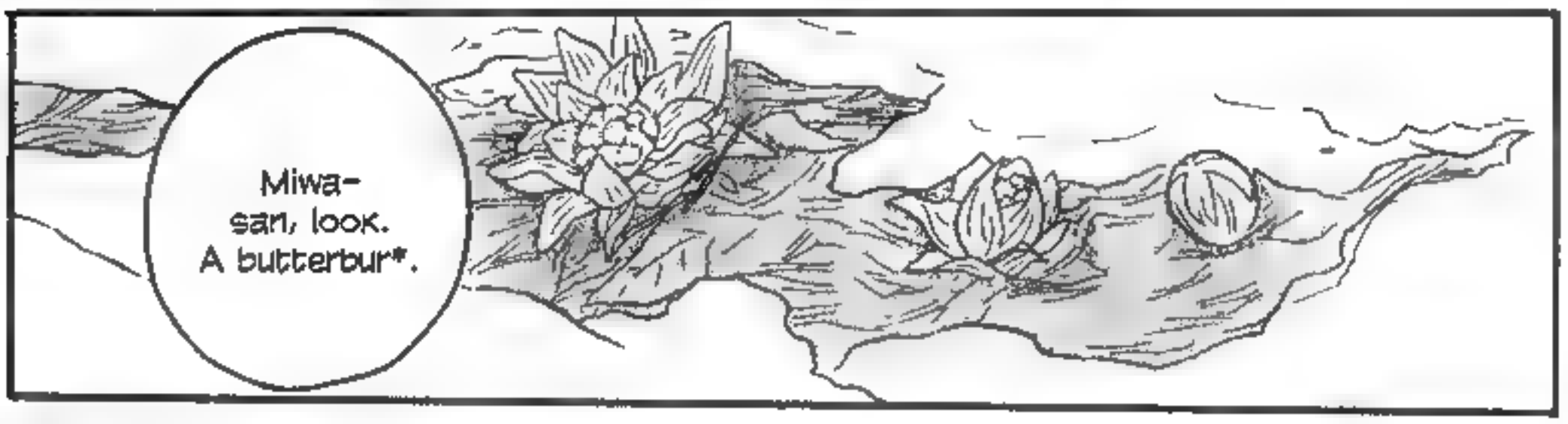
Youichi-san, you're like a little kid.

He he.

THUMP

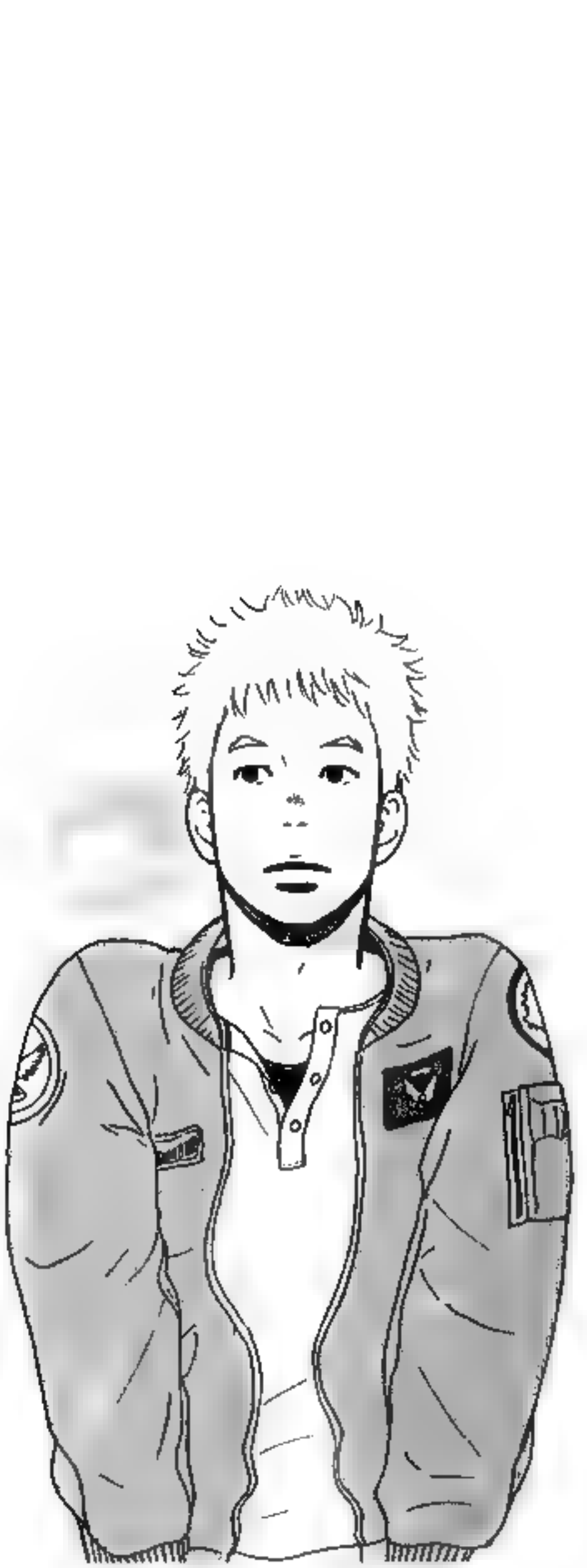
Hm?





<Vol. 4 Thaw> The End

*Note: Or fukinotuo (meaning a butterbur bud/shoot, more exactly).
A relative of tussilago/coltsfoot, and just as much a sign of spring.



Vol. 5 Spring

KOHHH

'kaay.

Wait until you see bubbles forming on the surface of that kombu*.

Ah.

Hey...

WHISPER

When should I turn down the heat for the pot, again?

Kutsu-zawa-kuuun!

RRRRip

Can't you move over a bit...?

A bit longer I guess.

It's kinda crowded here.

*Note: Kombu is a thick sort of kelp that's often used for soup stock.

...!!

Oh, wine?

Fancy.

TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP...

...

BA THUMP

I left some wine out by the door. Go fetch it, will ya?

Right, Youichi.

GRIND

PEEK

There were two bottles, which did you want?

Hey.

Shiori-chan... Are you sure it's safe to handle the knife like that?

You can't let *him* take the lead!

H-hang in there, Shiori!

BA THUMP BA THUMP BA THUMP BA THUMP

And four glasses.

The white one.

Hey!

GLUB GLUB GLUB GLUB GLUB GLUB steam steam

GLOOP GLOOP

WHOOOO

Turn it off already!

What are you spacing out for?

CLICK

And once again this year, the time has come

for our migratory birds to return to their home land in Siberia.

Are you listening...?

Hey?

...

SLAP

Before long, these swans—

Coming from all over, these north-bound swans gather here in flocks beginning to test their wings in preparation for a long journey.

SNAP

Miwa-san.

Could you help out here a bit?

What was that about?

?

And cheers for the hell you'll have to go through now to find a job!

Ugh.

Youichi, well done on that contest!

All right.

...

Miwa-san, this is really good! Come on, try it

Why is the nabe always so good at your place?

Aaah

SNARF

It would've been even better if the kombu wasn't overcooked.

I've been waiting for the day when I get to say that.

Ho Ho Ho

You don't have to look so happy while you wish me hell.

Hmm?

What do you mean?

Don't you think she's acting strange?

Hey, is every-thing all right with her?

Ah, sorry.

Youichi, you forgot your jacket.

Besides, she had some wine today as well.

I don't think there's ever a time when Miwa-san *isn't* acting a bit strange.

Yeah, but...

...There was this feature about swans on the news.

Before she had anything to drink ...

Hey, is every-thing okay?!

Whoa!

And all of a sudden, she...

LATER

Ah.

Yes, I'm fine.

I just stumbled a bit.

WHEEN

I was walking across the bridge the other day ...

Oh, that?

Miwa-san, where's that thing of yours?

Huh?

The "stole", was it?

It's getting a bit cold again today.

Uhh.

Hyuuu

...and carried it away somewhere.

Suddenly, the wind caught it ...

It's fine like this.

It's fine.

It's really important to you, right?

Eh?

Some-where...?

Shouldn't we look for it?!

"Is everything all right with her?"

Well, sure

I'm filled with...

Youichi-san, you're such a little kid.

Lately whenever she smiles, it's like...

...Con-flicting emotions.

"...on the news."

Could that really be it?

MI-

JERK

MIWA-SAN!

...

Miwa-san?

Miwa-san?!

Yes?

OPEN

An...

So you were here...

That was ..just a dream

Ah.

These failed creations just sort of piled up.

So I thought I'd throw them out.

What are you doing?

...

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

Miwa-san.

Did something happen?

Something's not right here.

Well, it happens.

Besides...

Until now,

you've never once failed.

Come on.

What happened?

Lately,

even though you're always smiling, it actually look like you're crying.

Yo...

Shove

but if there's anything I can do...

I don't know if telling me will make you feel better.

Please tell me, it's not good to keep things hidden.

Something did happen, right?

Youichi-san,

this is none of your concern.

Please leave me alone.

Shove

Shove

GRUMPLE

...
Fine then.
GRAB
RUSTLE
SCRUNCH
RUSTLE
You didn't have to say it like that.
I'm just asking because I'm worried about you.
ka-chak
SLAM
And it's not just her, either.
Everyone in the flock is worried
Mother is also worried about you.
Miwa.

Why...?

To Siberia.

Lets all
go home
together.

Why does it
hurt so much?

Even though
I already made
up my mind

"I'm going to
work even harder
from now on."

"For your sake."

Even though
I love Youichi san
this much.

Why?

I wonder if I can be helpful to him somehow?

Yooichi san

Where could Yooichi-sans house be?

It's fine like this.

put on a proper smile by the time he gets back.

I'd better...

GRIN

Miwa-san, listen up.

I just found something great.

I'm home.

CLACK CLACK

THIS!

Look!

This is your stole, right?

I was walking along the river when I just happened to spot it!

It's a frickin' miracle! Well, no...

Right?

Maybe you should say it's more like fate.

Youichi-san...

...

Outside,

the last snow of the season

began to fall.

I'm sorry.

Flutter

drip

drip

You'll do fine.

I wonder if I'm really cut out for job hunting.

Just putting the suit on is making me nervous.

phew

Aw man.

It looks like Miwa san's returned to her usual self

That's great

Just fine.

Yean?

STEP

Okay, I'll be off, then.

Ah. Youichi-san, hold up.

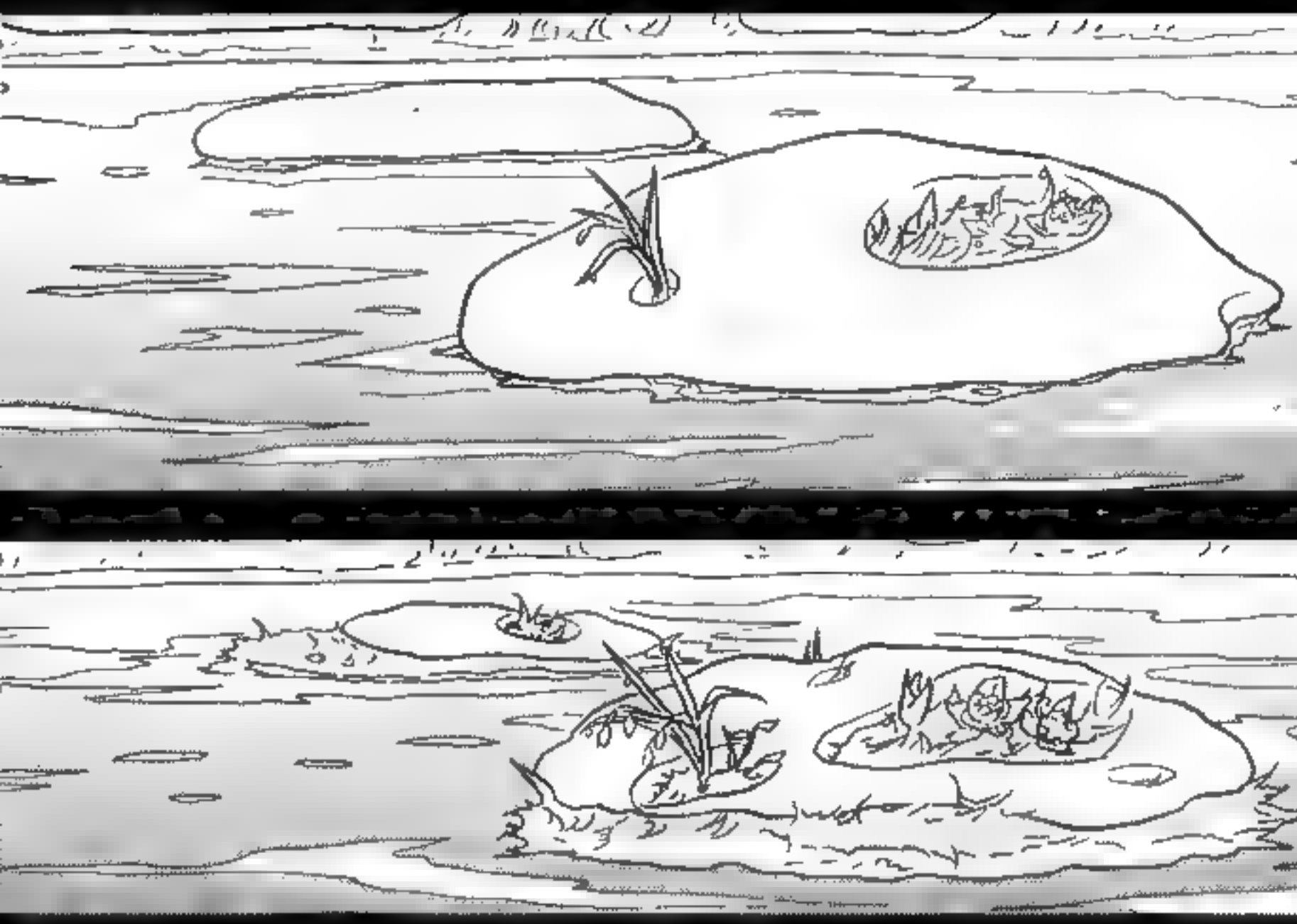
Do your best.

...

And take care.

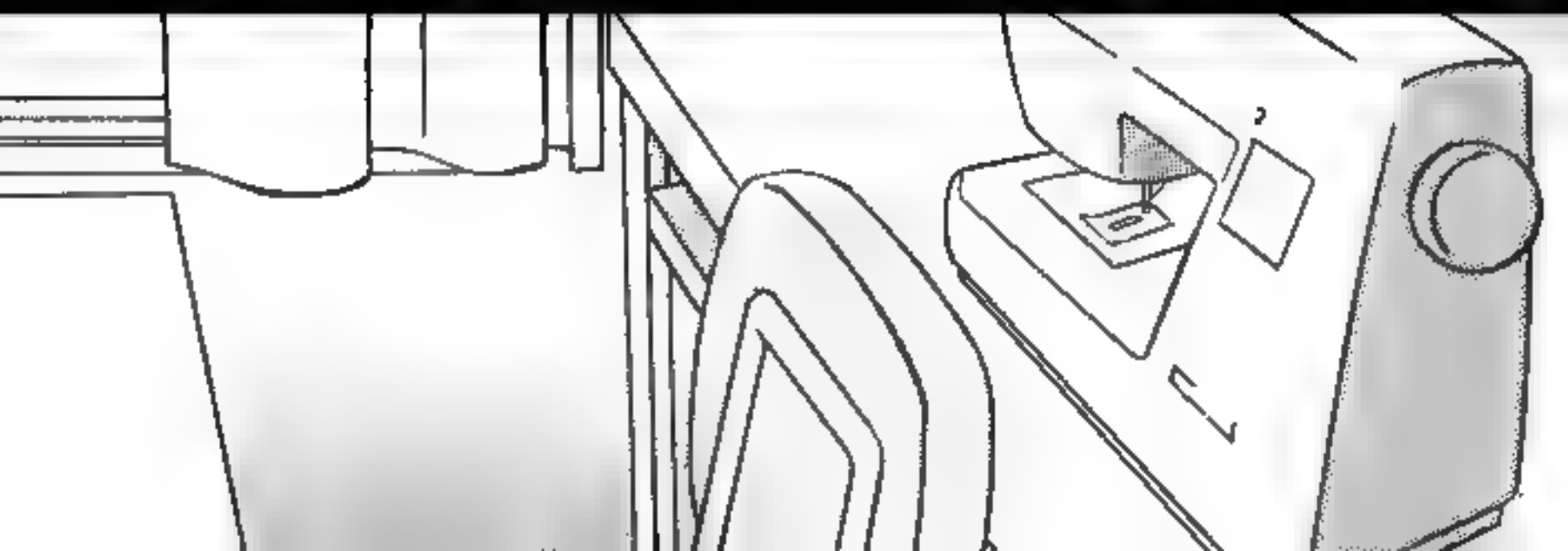
When I got home that day,

Miwa-san wasn't there.



Two days went by, then three.

But for some reason, she didn't come home.



crap.

...
Whoa.

Maybe I'd better run to the bus stop.

PLONK

Check.

Soo... Got the resume?

CHINKLE

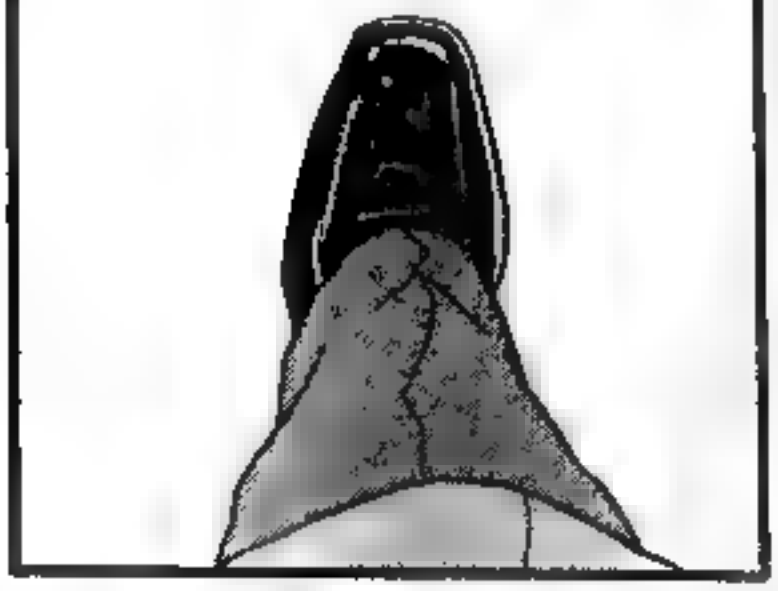
dig

TAP
TAP

You can come back

any time

Just step right in



Miwa-san

If this is about something you have to look for, I'll find it for you

Where are you rambling about?

Please come back.

PI RI RI RI PI RI RI RI RI RI

...

PI RI RI RI RI PI RI RI RI RI

Never mind the net shop now.

Don't be a fool.

What?

She still hasn't come home? But it's been two weeks already!

When I think about it...

I really don't know anything about Miwa-san.

KRSH

You know...

Do you have any ideas?

Or did you talk to someone about locating her, or...

It totally didn't make any sense. She could have been saying anything.

...Siberia or the tundra or whatever.

Even when she told me where she came from...

...You know, she showed up at my place completely out of the b ue.

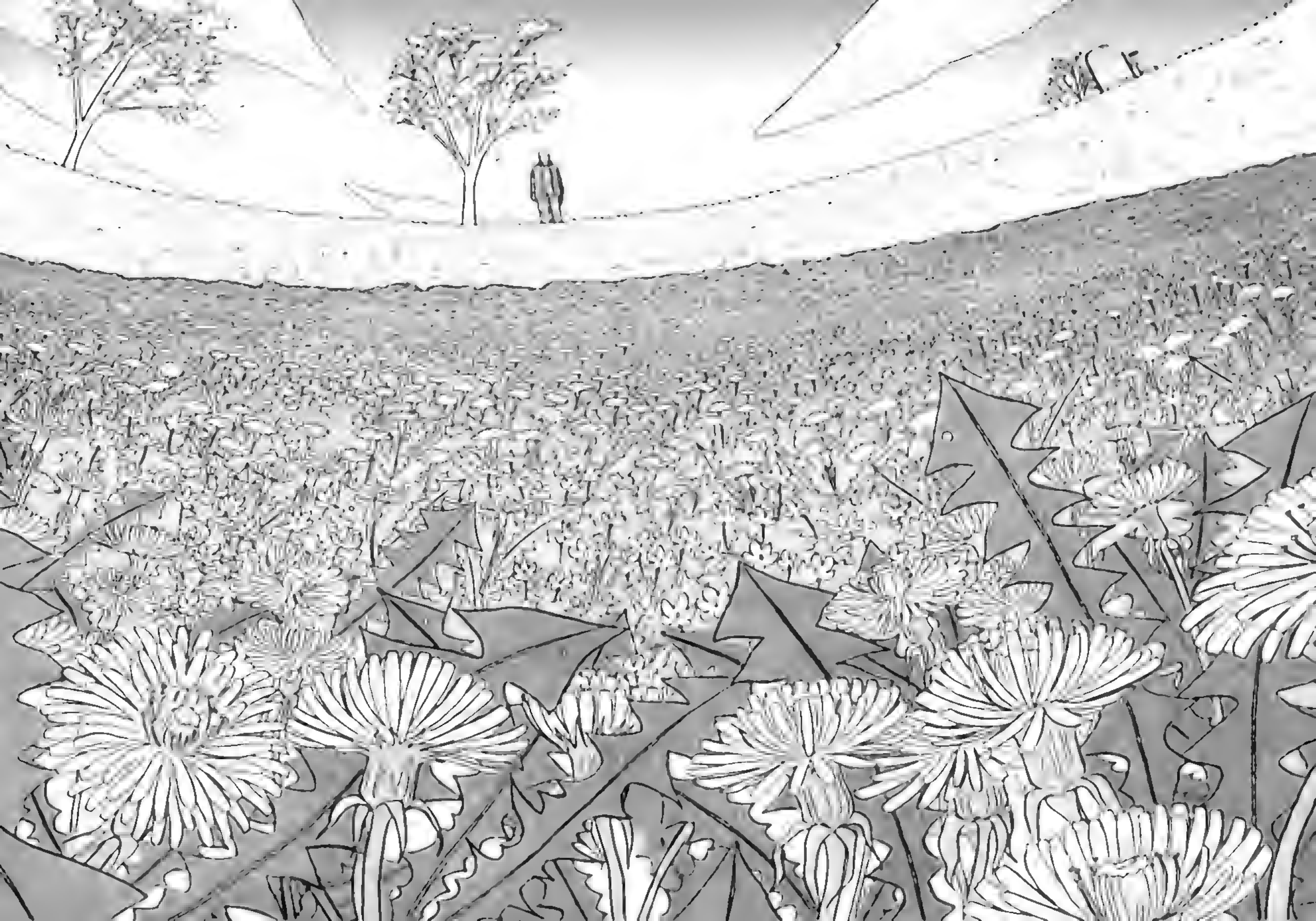
But, st l...

I get the feeling...

When I think of that...

That maybe she might come back just as suddenly...

...



Even though

Youth

Youth ?

...this scenery as well as..

our breaths used to be so white

HN
HKK
...

SNFFF...
UGHHHK...

...

...UGHHH.

Miwa san

isn't here anymore.

Shes no longer here

Its not like

shes just going to return on a whim, either

And there will never be another winter

this spectal

Fuse-kuuun.

Ah.

You wanna come too?

A bunch of us younger employees are going out drinking tonight. You know, to celebrate finishing that second set of plans.

I-I'm telling you I don't have one.

That's what you're telling *me*, but you're actually going to your girlfriend's place, eh?

NUDGE NUDGE

I really can't. I've promised to visit some friends of mine.

Today is a little..

Friends?

Hagoromo Mishin

I actually want to...

...remain single for a while...

...

What's your type?

What? No girlfriend?! Just give the word, and I'll introduce you to someone.

From a cabaret club, though.

EEK!

BRIGHT LIGHT! BRIGHT LIGHT!

I ONLY HAVE LOVE FOR BRIDGES!

RIGHT NOW...

If you know you're going to be late, the least you could do is give me a call!

You're late!

I wanted to get home early today, too.

S- sorry...

I remember, that winter two years ago

But I no longer feel like crying every time

Now and then...

Ah.
—I forgot—
Youichi was here.

Yo.

I'm home.

It's not just the two of us anymore.

We're three now.

I've been looking forward to this.

It's the first time I get to see te kind of place you two moved to.

What's his name?

Tsubasa.

Aaa.

That glare...

Whoa.
It totally feels like I know him already...

Note: Tsubasa or 翼 means "wing(s)."

flap

byuuuu

It sure is cold out today.

Maybe we should go buy some hand warmers?

bye bye

grab

Is something the matter?

that first snowflake

For some reason,

felt faintly warm

in my hand.

...No.

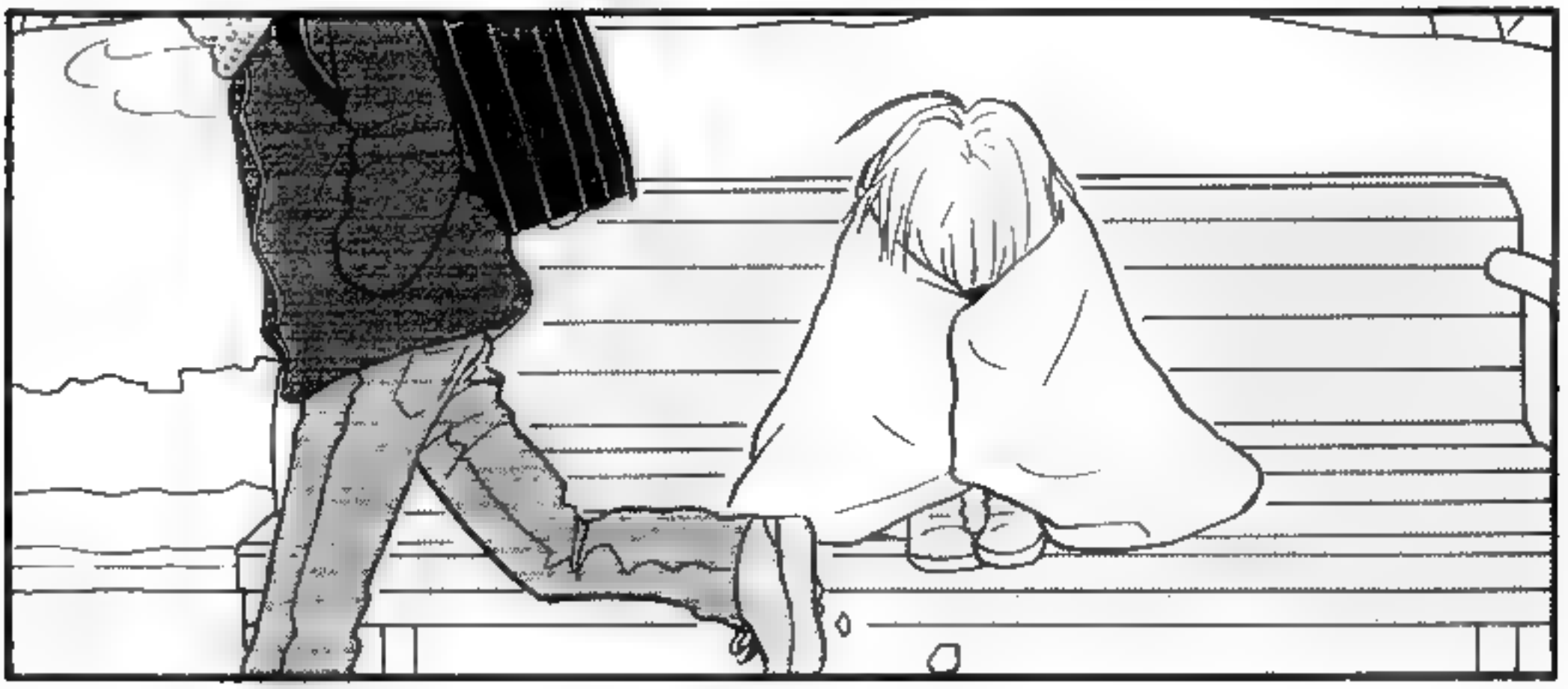
Nothing.

<Vol. 5 Spring> The End

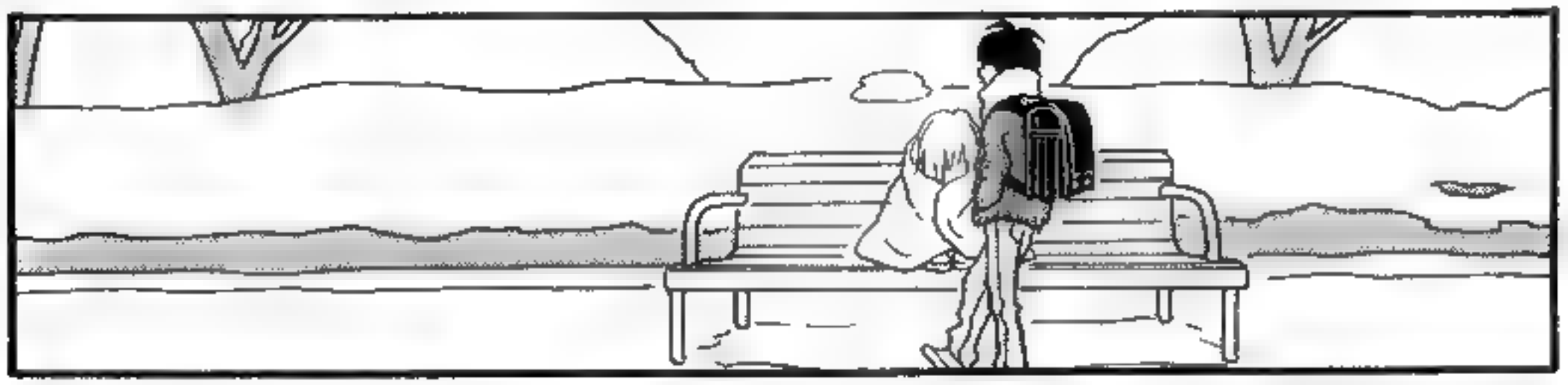
Extra Chapter: Way Home

Bye bye, Tsubasa.
Don't step in any poop.
See ya.

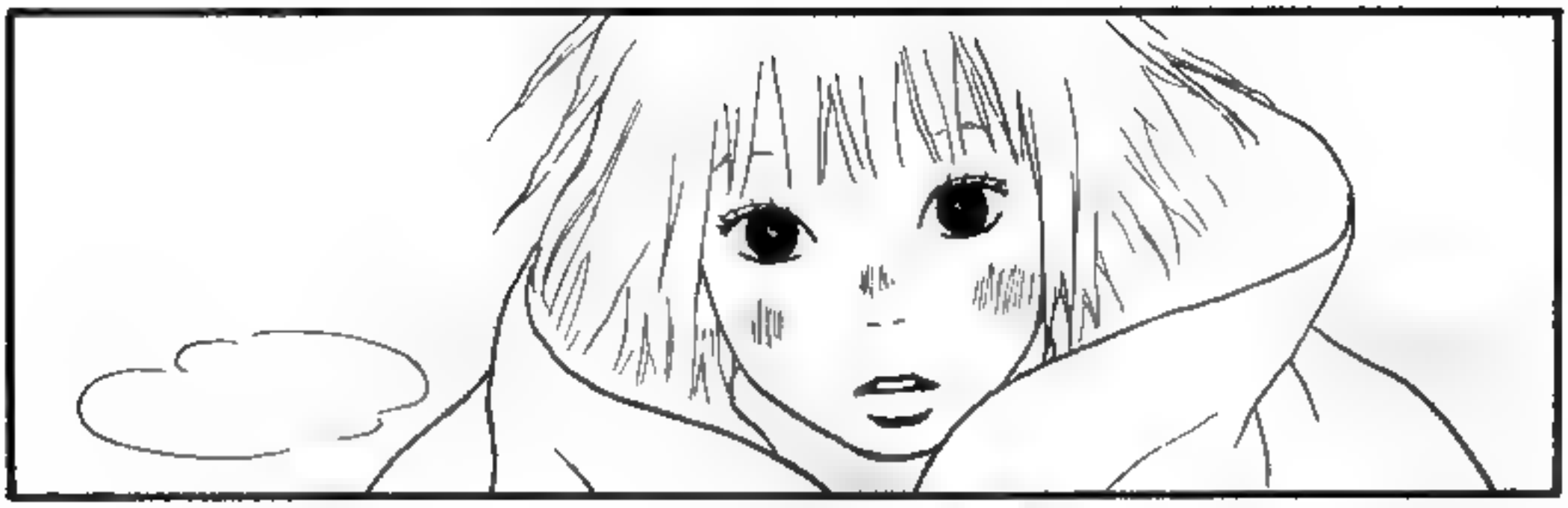
Yeah, right...



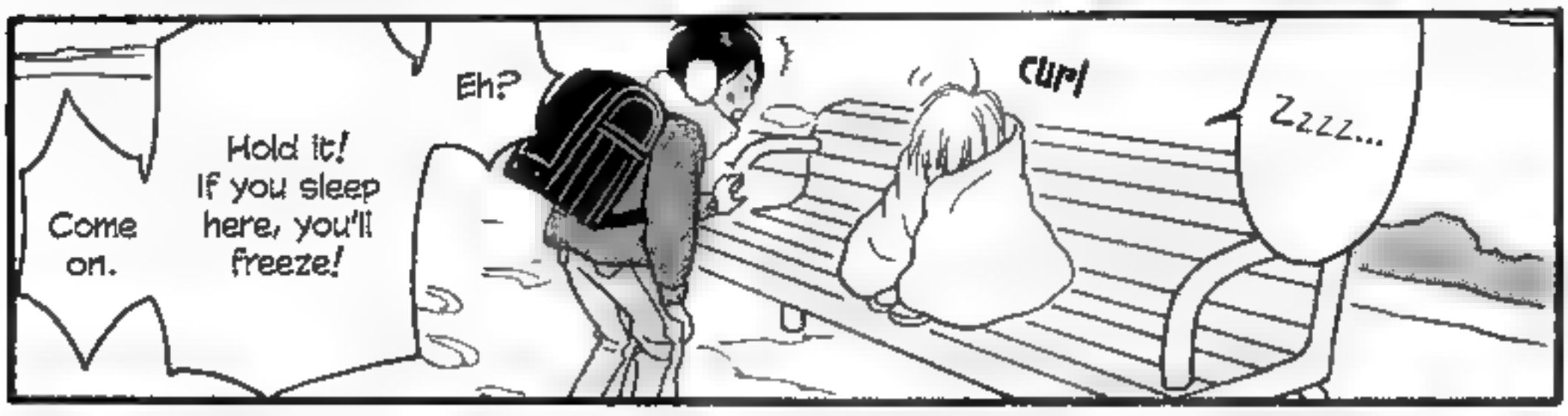
STOP

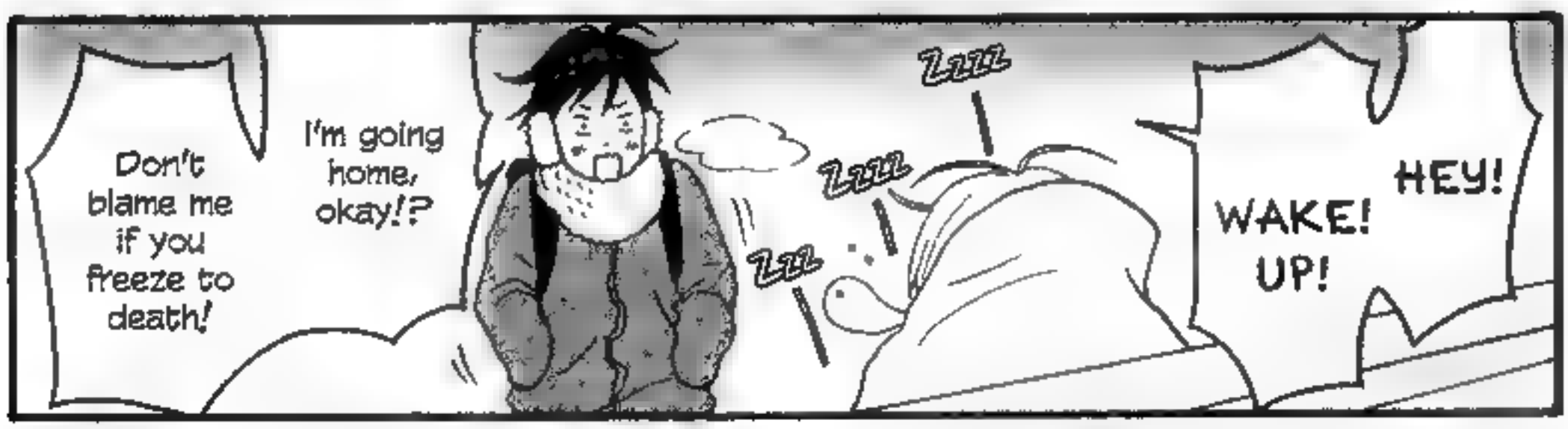


TWITCH
Hey.

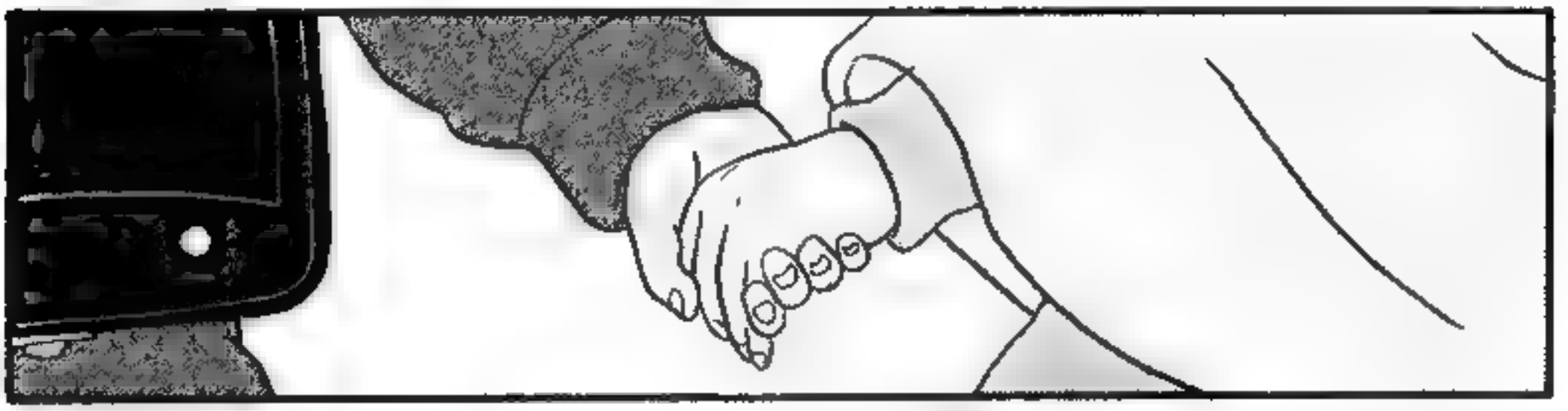


You're not grandpa.
What?


Come on.
Hold it! If you sleep here, you'll freeze!
Eh?
Curl
Zzzz...


Don't blame me if you freeze to death!
I'm going home, okay!?
Zzz
Zzz
Zz
HEY!
WAKE! UP!

...



Hmm, he's...
Big. And warm.
So what's your grandpa like, then?

And soft and cuddly.
And grandma always said he's really really kind.

So you've never actually... met him...?
Nope.
Eh... What?
...?

PLOD
PLOD
...

Hold it one second here.
...

There he is.
Ah!
It's not like we'll be able to find him with just that...

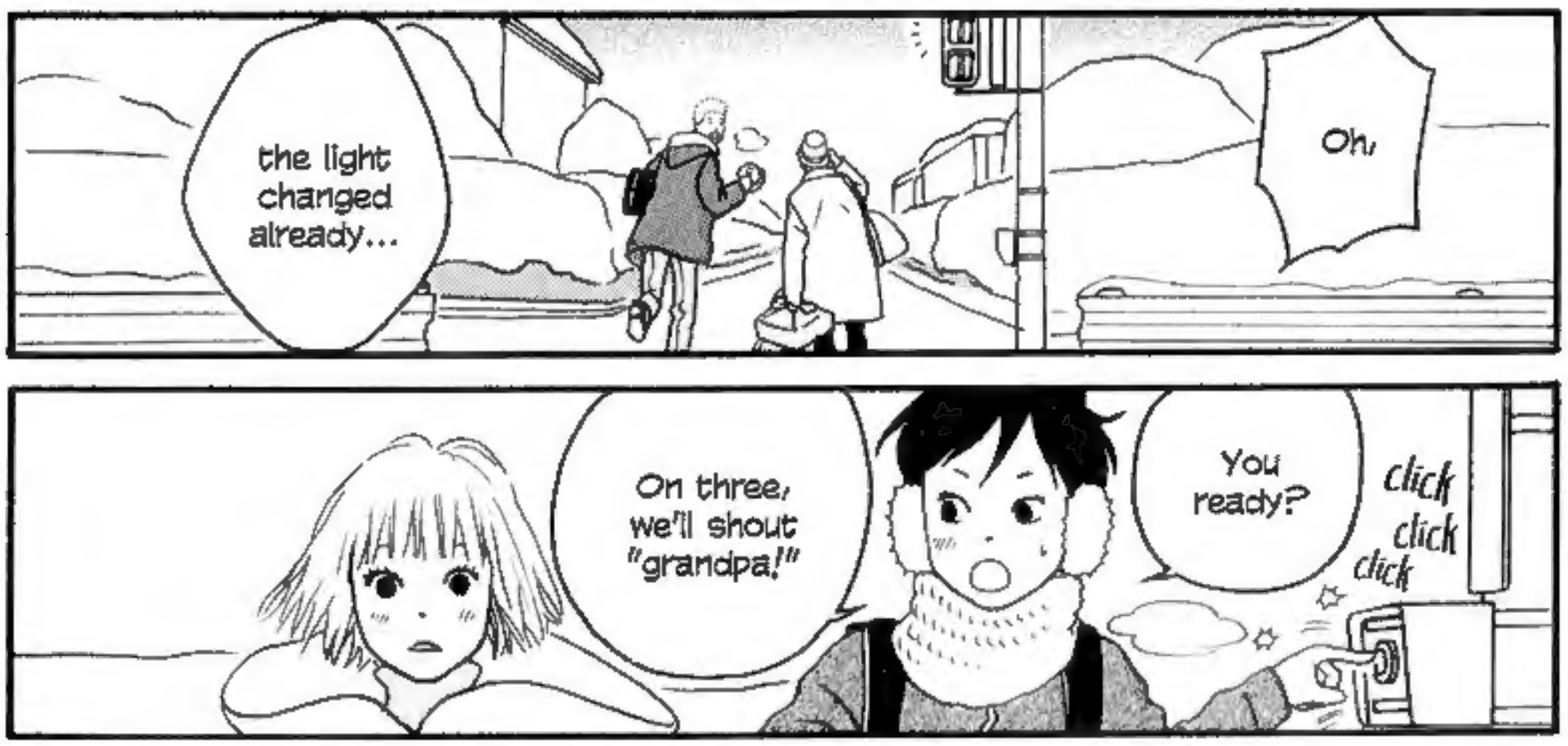
He's walking over there.
Look.
WHAT!?

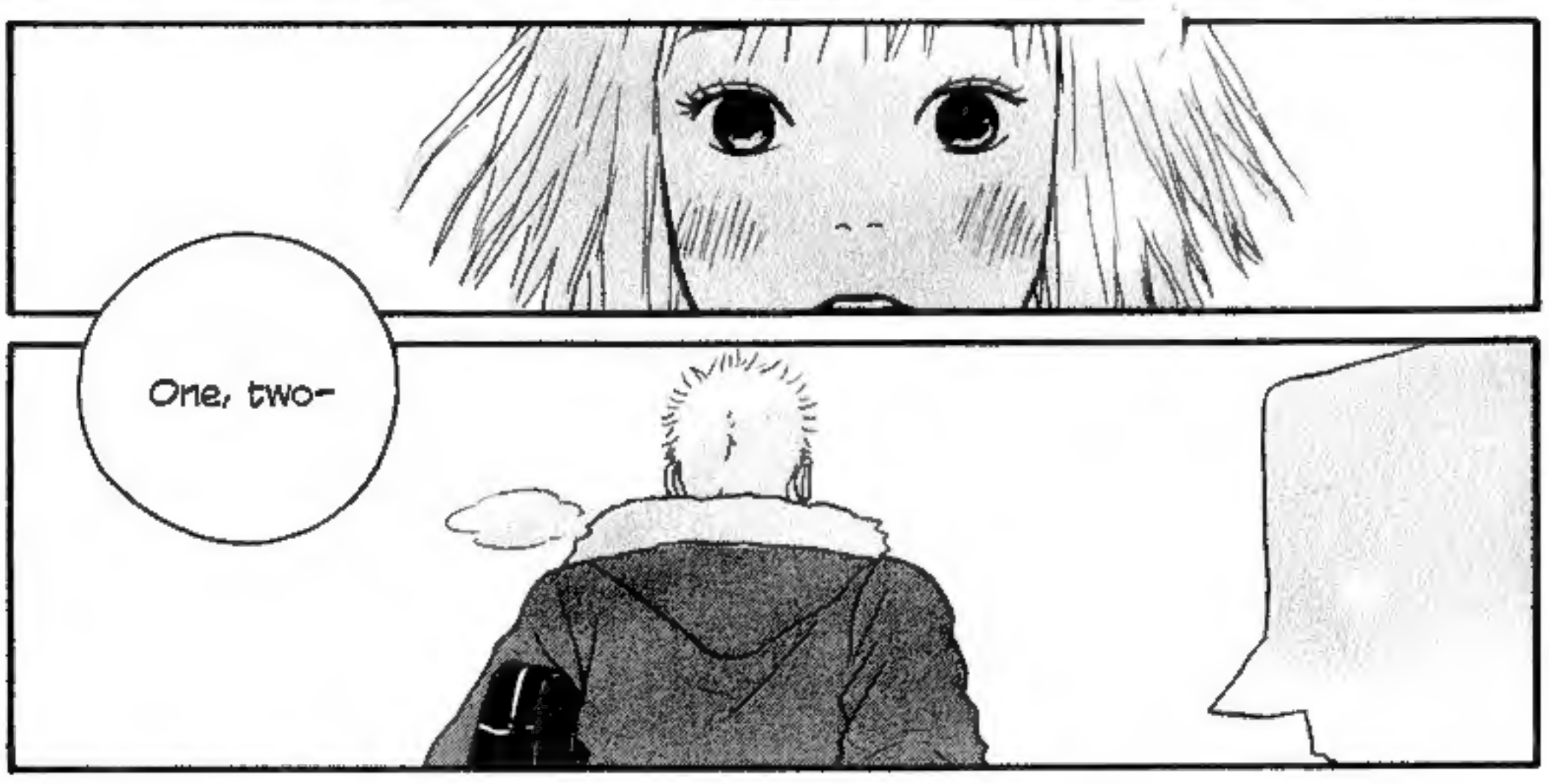
Yep.
Seriously? That's your grandpa?
...

Does she really know that's him?
Didn't she say she's never met him?

We'd better hurry.
It's turning red.
Ah,

Huh?
Hmm...
What's his name again?
He's friends with mom and dad.
That guy...
the light changed already...
Oh,


On three, we'll shout "grandpa!"
You ready?
click click click


One, two-

Just seeing him is enough.

GRA-

Never mind.

I wish I could be mated with someone like him.

Ahh

He's so wonderful.

For letting me see grandpa.

Thank you so much.

?

Is she all right?

What's she talking about now?

kiss

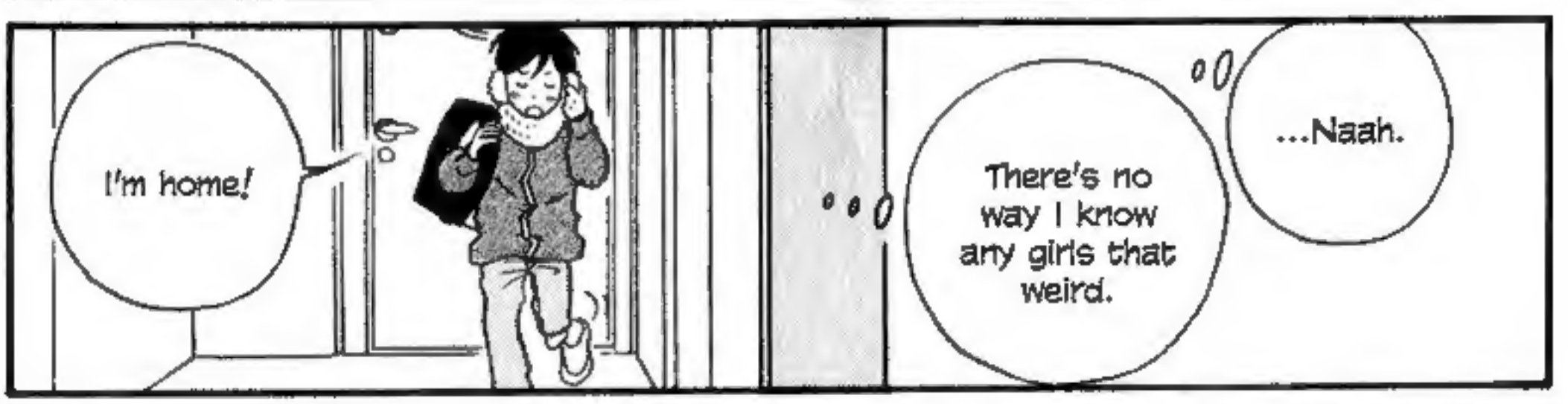
I hope we meet again when we're grown up.

I wouldn't mind being mated to someone like you.

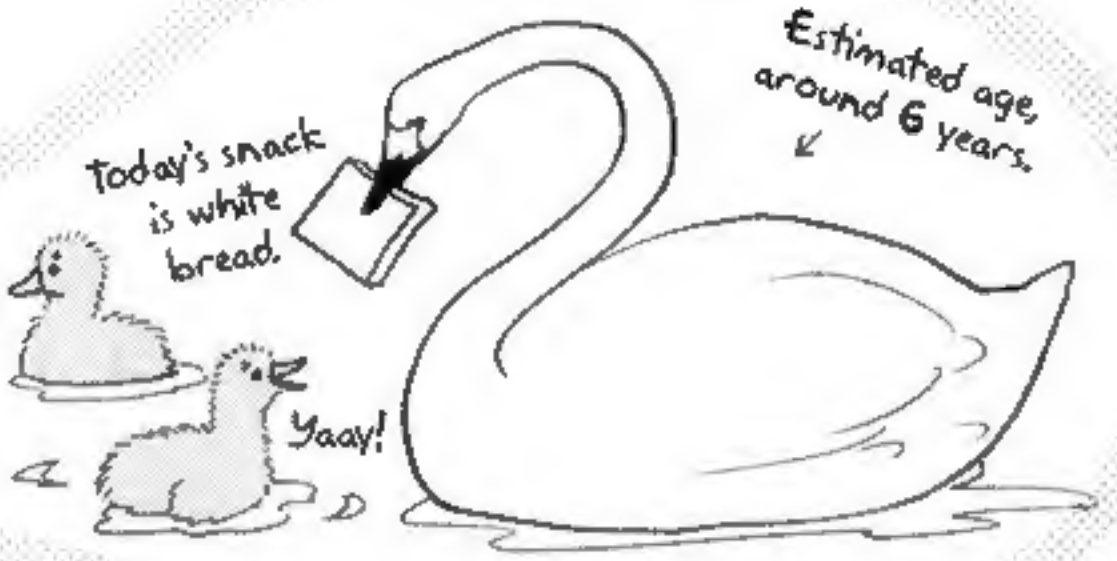
W-WHA-

Whoa!

?!



END In place of an Afterword



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